PROGRESSIVE LABOR MAGAZINE

PL

Fall 1980
Vol. 13, No. 4
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Hundreds Battle Klan

CHALLENGE

The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Willimantic, Conn.

SCOTLAND, Conn., Sept. 13—The Ku Klux Klan got a small taste of workers' and students' anti-fascist anger here today. Even though the KKK selected this rural, isolated location in order to protect themselves from urban workers, over 700 workers and students turned out to fight them.

FOR OVER ONE MONTH, THE INTERNATION Committee Against Racism and the Progressive L Party organized in Willimantic, Hartford, Storrs and other Connecticut communities around the line of "death to the Klan." PLP and InCAR pointed out that the rise of the KKK was no accident. It was a result of desperate bosses who have to build a fascist movement in order to keep angry workers in line.

In Scotland, Conn., the bosses turned out several hundred state police to protect the KKK from the anger and hatred of workers and students. They failed! The KKK rally was held at the crest of an isolated country road. The entrance to the farm where the Klan rally was to be held was guarded by over 80 state police cruisers. But angry anti-Klan demonstrators took over this road. They smashed scores of KKK members and sympathizers who were trying to get up the road.

As these KKK forces went up the road to the farmhouse, they had to walk past the anti-Klan forces. The KKKers and their sympathizers were beaten to a pulp as they tried to fight their way through. The farm is located, ironically, on Cemetery Road. And, indeed, it had this character as blood-soaked fascists were beaten and clubbed until the blood was running out of their ears, eyes, noses and throats.

One thug shouted to the young woman who had beaten him to the ground, "I thought you believed in peace!" "Well, you made a big mistake!" was her reply.

Many Latin workers from Willimantic, Conn. led the attack against the KKK. Every time a couple of KKKers or a small group of them tried to get up the road to the rally, they were pounded on by these workers. This militancy was not simply a defensive reaction to being attacked first. These workers realized that the KKK was out to destroy their home (the KKK had claimed they were going to burn down a multi-racial housing project in Willimantic, after "warning" white workers to move). The workers had taken the offensive. Additionally, dozens of marchers took up the cudgel against the KKK without a written invitation. Needless to say, many would-be KKK sympathizers retreated and ran home or crawled into the Klan rally later on, under the cover of darkness.

The battle of Cemetery Road was a [illegible] scene. The anti-fascist demonstrators were [illegible] offensive. Workers must always try to seize the [illegible] against their enemy. Even when a KKK sympathizer who lived stored [illegible] confidence. Those who [illegible] the fields rejoicing. The ideas behind [illegible] marchers were [illegible] a more [illegible] than

Crush the Klan–Build InCAR &

WILLIMANTIC, CT., Sept. 14—The anti-Klan demonstration was a month in the building. At least 100 people helped plan and execute the mass distribution of flyers and the street rallies that prepared the way for a massive turnout from the working-class districts of Hartford and Willimantic, and from the campus of the University of tion for all the marchers and fueled the fury needed to defeat the Klansmen. Our message to the Klan and their sympathizers was delivered. One newspaper reporter friendly to us who had infiltrated the Klan's rally said, "You could feel the fear in the air when the first bloody Klansman staggered into their rally."

But the impact was deeper than that. The KKK stormtroopers had sent letters to the white residents of *(continued on page 2)*

WILLIMANTIC, Conn., Sept. [illegible] of the International [illegible] and PLP-led victory in [illegible] the Ku Klux Klan (see C-D), [illegible] students in the Willimantic [illegible] forward in building [illegible] project, in [illegible] Sunday follow[illegible] following Thursday), 30 wo[illegible] 3 joined from the campus of [illegible] without even waiting for a [illegible]

*We are planning [illegible] courthouse when KKK Lizard [illegible] appearance to answer charges of carryi[illegible] *(co[illegible]*

[illegible]ge 2)

Smash the Klan–[illegible]

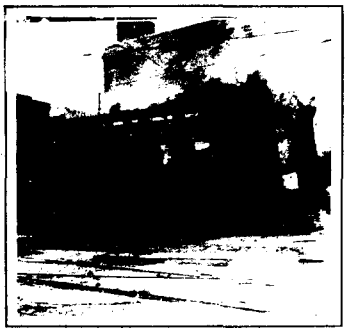
Nov. 1–Washin[illegible]

Every week CHALLENGE-DESAFIO brings you news of workers in struggle for socialism and against racism on the job, in the schools and neighborhoods, here and around the world. CHALLENGE strives to present the unconditional truth of class struggle, so our class can learn from experience how to win.

PL★

Fall 1980 *Vol. 13, No. 4*

PROGRESSIVE LABOR MAGAZINE
Published by the Progressive Labor Party
GPO Box 808 *Brooklyn, NY 11202*



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PLP NATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT: Class Warfare, Not Draft Resistance 8
As the ruling class moves closer to World War, we must carry out our commitment to build a base for revolution inside the bosses' army. The draft resistance movement is not a step in this direction.

Bosses' Auto Crisis—Our Opportunity 12
Day by day the auto industry, heart of U.S. capitalism, is sinking in a sea of declining sales and increasing layoffs. More and more auto workers are open now to our ideas, and we must seize the opportunity.

Smash Sexism with Socialist Revolution 24
Sexism is not an abstract evil or a moral issue. It is a powerful tool used by the bosses to divide and weaken the working class. This article studies in particular how it is used in the garment industry.

Auto Workers and Communism 42
This article, first in a series, examines the early history of the Communist Party and auto workers' unions. Among the questions raised is whether the CP's trade union work sacrificed revolution for reformism.

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A day-by-day record of struggle and contradiction, written by a former college teacher who returned to campus to carry out a plan to open new student work at a large urban university.

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Three Poems 64

How Capitalism Began 65
A cartoon history of the early days of capitalism, freely adapted from a Swedish original.

The articles appearing in PL Magazine are published because the Editorial Board believes they are generally useful in the ideological development of the international revolutionary communist movement. Only the editorial and PLP National Committee documents represent the official policies of the Party.

notes and comment

We welcome contributions from our readers on articles in **PL Magazine** and related topics. Both letters, which appear under **notes**, and longer contributions, which are printed as **comment**, should be addressed to:

PL MAGAZINE
GPO Box 808
Brooklyn, New York, 11202

Health Care Issue Criticized

To the Editor:

I have a criticism of the health care issue of **PL Magazine**. I think it was extremely reformist. A disaster even.

I realize that particular articles in the magazine don't necessarily represent official PL policy, but **PL Magazine** is an official party publication and an issue should overall reflect our line. That is why people buy it.

Did the last issue present a revolutionary communist line on health? It certainly did not. The basic theme of almost all the articles was militant reformism, that if we all get together and fight hard we can make the health care system be less racist and serve us better. I urge you all to go over the issue article by article looking especially closely at the summaries and conclusions, asking yourself in each case, "What is the basic message the writer is trying to get across?" I think you will agree that whatever information the articles supply (and a lot of it is good), the line presented is not our own.

The first article (Racism and Mass Disease) is politically the best, but even so it is very weak. It makes the point that capitalism is the real cause of mass disease, but falls short of saying that only the destruction of capitalism can end mass disease. In fact, the author says that "the fight against racism" (without the fight for socialism?) is "the necessary preventative measure." The article ends not with a call for revolution but with ambiguous mumblings about "fundamental social change... to the left" being "on the agenda."

The other articles in the issue are even worse. The next one, on medical apartheid, presents good evidence that medical care in the U.S. is segregated and that capitalism is the cause. So what do we do about it? According to the author, "the only answer to cutbacks of medical services" is... no, not revolution, but "a multiracial unified movement" for reforms. The article calls on us to smash... no, not the state, but "medical apartheid." The words "socialism" and "revolution" do not appear at all, and of course the role of communists is not discussed either.

The other articles are similar. The one on affirmative action calls for "integration of the professions" to help "stem the tide of cutbacks" and the "drive towards fascism in medical care." The one on medical fascism says, "we believe in fighting back militantly" but doesn't even mention what we are fighting **for**. Even the introduction, which surely ought to present the PLP line, ends by talking about only "a patient-worker-student-professional alliance that will win struggles against racism in health care."

The introduction at least (in the middle) calls for revolution and says that only socialism can provide adequate health care. Only two of the articles themselves (out of seven) present this point of view, and in each case, only in a paragraph or so tac on almost like a disclaimer to an otherwise reformist article. They seem to be saying, "OK, we know in the long run that only socialism can solve our problems—but in the meantime, let's get down to the real business of fighting for improvements." The emphasis of the issue as a whole is not on destroying the bosses' system but rather on trying to improve it so it will meet our needs.

Part of the problem, obviously, is that the articles are really CAR articles which have been collected for an issue of **PL Magazine**. The articles were written from the CAR point of view and since CAR is not a revolutionary or socialist organization, it is not surprising that these concepts were not discussed. However, even if this explains the issue, it doesn't excuse it. Since when does **PL Magazine** devote special issues to the struggle for particular reforms, discussed from a purely reformist-oriented point of view, however honest and militant? The message we in PLP must get across is that in the long run capitalist health care **can't** be reformed and is **inherently** racist.

A special issue on health care could have used a lot of the CAR material but would absolutely have at least one article devoted to socialist medicine—for example, a description of health care in the USSR and China when they were socialist. Such an issue would also need an article on the problems of organizing medicine during a revolutionary war. If we are going to build a Red Army sometime, we will need a red medical corps and we will have to start it by winning over thousands of health workers, professionals, and students who presently staff the bosses' doomed medical system. We might as well at least start talking about it now.

I admit that it is an exaggeration to talk about "a disaster" when one issue of **PL Magazine** goes wrong. It could be far more serious, though, if future issues continued the mistake of replacing PLP by CAR and revolution by reform. And it **would** be a real disaster if we implement this line in practice, and spend our time trying to patch up capitalism instead of destroying it. This is a real danger. Even the **In Struggle** article, a reprint from **Challenge**, gives the same let's-fight-hard-and-improve-the-system outlook of the other articles, with PLP presented basically as militant leaders of the reform struggles.

We should learn from the magazine mistake.

In Struggle, B.W.

Editors' Reply

We are generally in agreement with Comrade B.W.'s criticism. The articles were originally written, as was mentioned, for Health Committee Against Racism, and it seems clear now that our efforts to revise them to present a communist viewpoint on the subjects was not deep enough or successful. We will struggle to do better, and ask the help of our comrades and readers.

notes and comment

The Party and the Working Class

To the Editors of PL Magazine:

Progressive Labor recently restated, in an editorial response to a letter from D.F., in Vol. 13, #2 of PL Magazine, the belief that the working class controlled the USSR during Stalin's life. This control was supposedly "exercized through" the Communist Party. However, by definition a communist party is an active organization which leads the working class. As long as there's a communist party it leads or tries to. When the awareness of the working class rises enough, the party can be dispensed with. Only then would or could the working class be in control.

PL's belief is dangerous because PL presumes to lead a revolution here and the first thing I expect of a leader is that he/she be aware of his/her role. Otherwise we slip into a nether world of double speak, where leaders do things "to" people under the guise that it is "for" people.

I recommend that PL freely publicize its intent to sieze political power and work towards worker control—like the CP USSR once did, only better.

Fraternally
L.T., Pasadena

PL★ PROGRESSIVE LABOR MAGAZINE

Fall 1980 Vol. 13, No. 4

Published Quarterly by Progressive Labor Party
GPO Box 808
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11202

Subscription Rates
Individuals $5/6 issues
Library/Institution $10/year
Foreign Rates on Request

Application to Mail at 2nd-Class Rates Is Pending At New York, New York

POSTMASTER: Please send change of address notices to above address.

From the Editors

HELP NEEDED

This issue of *PL Magazine* is about a month behind schedule. This is a serious question—a publication that does not appear on a regular schedule is a publication that comrades and friends can't plan on selling regularly, and which bookstores and libraries will not stock.

To correct this problem, we need more articles, more editors, proofreaders, and production staff. If you are able to spend a bit of time reading and commenting on proposed articles, proofreading typeset galleys, or pasting up the magazine, please let us know, now! The magazine is *always* in need of articles, both on the Party's work and development and on Marxist analysis of world trends, culture and science.

This magazine must be a mass organ for the working class. It is not printed only for students and faculty; it is not meant to sit in car trunks and basements. It is for selling constantly, along with all our other literature. If we don't sell it, we won't write for it, and in the end, we won't even publish it. If we do write for it and use it, we will have a potent tool for spreading our ideas in the working class.

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For more information about the Progressive Labor Party, or to discuss PL's ideas with PL members, write to addresses above.

comment and notes

Cultural Evolution and Natural Selection

The two articles on sociobiology in the Spring 1980 PL Magazine (Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 12-35) were important contributions to our attack on academic racists. They will help our comrades in the universities to destroy the new form of academic racism—just as we smashed the Jensen-Herrnstein racism.

However, these articles do little to help us develop a communist social science. In a communist view, human beings and our specifically human culture (labor, language, and learning) are the outcomes of millions of years of human evolution. We are animals, just as any other species, and the general principles of evolutionary biology apply to our development.

The new social Darwinists (Wilson, etc.) say that our behavior is genetically fixed—that any human being who develops as an organism will display the same racist and sexist characteristics that the capitalist class displays and promotes in the rest of us. A communist view is that almost all human behavior is controlled by the cerebral cortex of the brain; this behavior is learned from experience and from the accumulated experience of our ancestors (which is called "socialization.") Our behavior is malleable—as our environment (particularly our social environment) changes, so does our behavior. Capitalism, which at one time promoted the interests of our species, now offers no hope for the working class. So our class will learn to destroy capitalism. The malleability of human behavior (and the development of the cerbral cortex) is itself the product of human evolution. This malleability can be explained by Darwinian principles of adaptation and natural selection.

Unfortunately, the articles in **PL** emphasize only the **differences** between humans and other animals and none of the similarities. The unfortunate consequences of this emphasis emerge most clearly in the review of Sahlins' book **The Use and Abuse of Biology**. Sahlins is an anthropologist. Anthropology in the U.S. has developed a tradition which opposes social Darwinism. This tradition goes back to the work of Alfred Kroeber early in the 20th century. In a 1917 article called "The Superorganic" Kroeber attacked the social Darwinists of his day. The article demolishes the idea that similarities and differences in human behavior are caused by genetic similarities and differences. But to replace the social Darwinist view Kroeber substitutes the ideas that human culture makes human beings "unique" and that there can be no scientific understanding of human culture. The Kroeber tradition in anthropology is the delight of religious mystics and other anti-science and anti-communist forces.

Sahlins is squarely in the Kroeber tradition. While he effectively attacks Wilson, his book contains several disgusting pronouncements about the mystical uniqueness of human beings. It is very bad that a communist review did not point out this central weakness in Sahlins' book.

In American anthropology the main opposition to social Darwinists has come from the anti-science mystics of the Kroeber tradition. The Marxists have been largely excluded. This enables the social Darwinists to claim that they are the only ones that apply biological principles to human culture. Thus they claim to be the champions of science against mysticism. The **PL** article's endorsement of Sahlins' book thus plays right into the social Darwinists' hands.

The weakness in the review of Sahlins' book is related to a shortcoming in the first article. The first article does not deal with the question: what is the connection between a Marxist science of human history (and, more generally, Marxist anthropology) and evolutionary biology? The article seems to imply that there is **no connection**. It describes evolutionary biology as a science concerned solely with the process of change in genetic material.

Marxism-Leninism has developed a science of the history of human culture (of which the science of history developed by Marx and Engels is a special case.) I believe that this science is a special case of evolutionary development, involving both similarities and differences with our genetic evolution.

Evolutionary biology says that organisms are relevantly different in some of their physics and behavioral characteristics. In a particular environment some of those differences will be advantageous while others will be disadvantageous. For example, in Early 19th Century England spotted moths had an advantage over dark grey ones. They were invisible to predators against the lichen-covered bark of the trees. In that environment there was selection for the spotted coloring and for the genes that caused this spotted coloring. The moths with the spotted coloring were able to survive and hence to reproduce at a higher rate; so they are said to be **adapted** to that environment and the spotted coloring is said to be **adaptive**. When the environment changed later in the 19th century and the trees became covered with industrial soot, the grey coloring and the corresponding gene became adaptive in some areas and the grey moths became better adapted to this new environment.

Evolution of the organisms on earth occurs because of changes in the environment and changes in the genetic makeup of organisms. As new genetic materials develop (through recombination and mutation) some of the characteristics these new materials produce are more and others less adaptive. Some such characters and their corresponding genes are selected for and others against. Hence, the populations of various species of organisms change.

Human beings have their own evolutionary history, spanning at least the last 12 million years, when our ancestors began to be differentiated from other apes. Theories of human evolution are partly speculative, but development went something like this: As the climate on earth changed, the forested areas in Africa receded, being replaced by grasslands. As the forests receded some apes began to live in the grasslands. In the grasslands, the ability to stand erect and move about readily on two feet (bipedal locomotion) were advantageous, enabling animals who had it to see dangers and opportunities over the top of grass. With the

(continued on page 6)

'Cultural Evolution Is Not Biological'

The following comments from the author of The of Racism (**PL**, Spring 1980), are part of a correspondence with the comrade whose essay appears above.)

I will hurry this along making brief and fleeting comments. There are parts of the paper I agree with and parts I disagree with. I will begin with the general and cover as many of the specifics as time will allow.

I agree with your desire to develop a communist social science. I disagree that this can be done by the simple transfer of biological concepts to social "science." It is precisely this tendency of the sociobiologists that we communists so resolutely fight against. The phrase, natural selection, has a specific biological meaning. Spencer tried to adapt that meaning to explain the hierarchy of nations, and classes, and institutions, and it is correct that his kind of jingoism be smashed. Interestingly, sociobiology is little refinement of Spencer's social darwinism. Economists have tried to explain capitalism by use of natural selection. And we all know how that came out. Now, if natural selection is but a special case of a larger phenomenon, let's be about discovering that larger phenomenon, and quit trying to fit everything into a special case phenomenon. This is what your article seems to try to do. That is, fit cultural evolution into the theory of natural selection. And this is exactly what Wilson is trying to do. I'm not sure why you are not seeing that your paper would be more acceptable to Wilson than to communists. I will try to be more specific.

I first want to be plain on the issue that at this point in time (if I'm wrong I will change) I cannot agree that cultural and biological evolution are causally related. Biological variation within interbreeding populations is caused by gene variation (mutations, recombination, etc.). Variation alone does not produce speciation. Darwin was the first to suggest that speciation cannot occur without a geographical isolating event (one population becomes two sub-populations between which matings cannot occur), and without a long enough period of geographic isolation to allow for reproductive isolation. (Reproductive isolation is explained as that point after which the members of one group, now a new species, are biologically incapable of producing offspring with members of the other group, another new species.) **Natural selection does not make species.** Natural selection **changes the composition of gene pools** of interbreeding populations. In other words, **even in biology the word natural selection has a specific meaning**, which loosely interpreted means the differential survival of genotypes. Only through discovery is it possible to determine the precise cause-effect relationship between the environment and differential survival of allelic genes. (Industrial melanism is, in point of fact, one of a very few cases that has been studied in detail.) We simply do not know what it was that "selected" for 8 fingers, 2 thumbs and 10 toes, skin, hair, toenails, two lungs and one heart, etc., etc. Nor, for the most part, do we know the role of genes in the development of these biological parts.

When it comes to human behavior we know very little indeed. I am not aware that it is a communist view that "almost all human behavior is controlled by the cerebral cortex of the brain." It would seem to me that the communist view would be to discover what controls human behavior. Clearly there is a process called socialization, and yes, the dominant ideology extent at any given time is always a primary factor in the process. But we do not understand the mechanism by which ideology translates into human behavior. The brain is involved . . . more parts of the brain than the cerebral cortex . . . but so are glands and the hormones they produce, and clearly the feedback relationship between the CNS and hormones is far from clear. I agree with you that behavior "is malleable" but I cannot agree that "**This malleability is explained by Darwinian principles of adaptation and natural selection." There is, plain and simple, no evidence for this.** In other words, Darwin made a contribution to one aspect of biological science, but what he said cannot be transferred to other natural phenomena without first discovering whether it explains these other phenomena. To do so without discovery is reductionist, and **it is the use of reductionism, as a substitute for discovery, that is so abhorrant about sociobiology and social darwinism and IQ psychology.**

I agree with you that the first article "does not deal with the question: what is the connection between a Marxist science of human history (and, more generally, Marxist anthropology) and evolutionary biology?" That is a true statement. It is true in part because I do not know what that relationship is. I don't know what Marxist anthropology is. I never heard of it before I read it in your paper. The only thing I am familiar with is the difference between dialectical materialism and aspects of bourgeois science, e.g., mechanical materialism, reductionism, logical positivism, etc. But, as far as I am aware, **dialectical materialism calls for discovery**, albeit with a different outlook and different methods. If the article implies that there is no connection, that's overreading. I don't know the connection. And, if it describes evolutionary biology "as a science concerned solely with the process of change in genetic material (I'll let genetic material symbolize gene pool changes, geographic and reproductive isolating events, and the corresponding phenotypic changes throughout biological time)," that's because I am unaware that what we know about mutations, natural selection, and the other aspects of evolutionary biology explain **any** phenomena outside that domain.

If, as you suggest, the science of the history of human culture, or the special case of the science of history, is a "special case of evolutionary development," then the burden of "proof" is on you. I would turn it around to say that evolutionary biology **may** be a special case of the history of human culture. (Your "evidence" of evolutionary biology is not complete by any means. The last paragraph is so badly worded, as to mislead. First, we don't know **why** evolution of organisms occurs. And second, there is a world of difference

(continued on page 7)

comment and notes

'Natural Selection' (from page 4)

development of bipedal locomotion, the hands were freed for other purposes and there was selection for hands that could carry, throw accurately, etc.

Eventually, (at least 3 million years ago) our ancestors began to make tools by chipping stones. Toolmaking and the use of tools—adaptive learned behavior—gave an advantage to those individuals who developed genes for hands with a fully opposable thumb and a precision grip. Knowledge of the making and use of tools could be passed down from generation to generation. This gave an advantage to individuals who developed a larger cerebral cortex capable of storing large amounts of information. Language was the medium by which information was passed on to succeeding generations: so there was selection for animals with brains adapted for language abilities.

This dependence of human behavior on the brain and on the transmission of culture from generation to generation led to the long infancy of humans and widespread development of monogamy as a stable family form for the nurture of children. The malleability of human behavior and its dependence on information learned and stored in the brain is itself the outcome of human physical evolution.

Our species has developed physical characteristics (hands, large brain) and general cultural characteristics (labor, language, monogamy) which are adaptive, enabling those individuals who possess them to reproduce at a higher rate. But there is more to the story. There is also a general history of the development of human culture. Our species has gone from the making of primitive stone tools to ever more efficient instruments of production. Totally separate human societies have repeatedly developed slavery as a system of social organization and then moved to other social forms.

I would suggest the following explanation: succeeding human cultures are better adaptations. They enable individuals in the societies that adopt them to reproduce at a higher rate. More efficient technologies have tended to supplant less efficient ones because, in the long run, socities that have adopted them have expanded faster than societies that didn't. Forms of social organization which release new productive powers will prevail because societies that adopt them expand.

The above paragraph implies that there are similarities and differences between genetic and cultural evolution. The differences include these: In genetic evolution similarities and differences from one generation to another are caused by the inheritance of genetic material from the previous generation. Differences between one generation and the next are caused by "imperfections" in the copying process; these "errors" (recombination, crossing over mutation) produce new genetic material. In cultural evolution similarities between generations are caused by the socialization of each generation by the preceding one. This socialization preserves the accumulated cultural adaptations of the species or society. Differences arise because new generations may learn **new** lessons from experience. Where these new learned behaviors catch on they will be transmitted to succeeding generations, and where they constitute better adaptations, societies which adopt them will expand.

Another difference between genetic and cultural evolution is this: In genetic evolution the physical or behavioral characteristic is the product of the **individual's** genetic material. In cultural evolution behavioral changes are adopted by a social **group** and the culture passed down from one generation to another is the **group's** culture.

What is similar in both genetic and cultural evolution is the process of natural selection. Individuals and societies differ in their physical and behavioral characteristics. Some of those characteristics are advantageous when compared with alternatives. Those with advantageous characteristics are better adapted—they reproduce at a higher rate and supplant those with disadvantageous characteristics. In this process it makes no difference that the causes of the characteristics are different (genes **vs.** learning) and that the unit on which selection acts is different (individual **vs.** group). Both biological and cultural evolution are processes where differences in characteristics lead to differences in rates of population growth.

I have tried to show how human cultural evolution and communist science of history can be understood as a special case of a general biological evolutionary process, involving both similarities and differences with genetic evolution. It is important to avoid a misunderstanding of this account. The evolutionary model suggested is **sometimes** a competitive one, implying that individuals and societies compete, the better adapted tending to supplant the less well adapted. But in the socialist revolution we are organizing there will be no situation where socialist societies will expand faster than and simply supplant capitalist societies. All capitalist societies worldwide will be destroyed violently by the workers of the world.

While in many cases of genetic evolution there is competition between individuals and societies, this is not essential to natural selection. One individual or variety may supplant another without competition for territory, food, etc., without their even coming into contact. Capitalism will die because of its own internal contradictions and because it produces a class to destroy it. Socialism will prevail because it unfetters the potential of our species.

This process is one of natural selection. Socialism will entail a great expansion of the human population as well as growth in the well-being of individual human beings.

The first article on sociobiology **precludes** an account such as the one I have suggested. The author says, "If human social behavior is adaptive, then it must be caused by the genes." I have tried to show that this is not necessarily so.*

I am not sure the account I have given is right. But I believe that we owe ourselves **some** explanation of the connection between Marxist-Leninist science of history and the science of biological evolution.

A St. Louis Comrade

*All characteristics are "caused by the genes" **and** by the environment. Human behavior is the product of our genes (which produce a human brain) and our learning. The issue is better stated: are similarities and differences among individuals caused by genetic similarities and differences or by environmental similarities and differences.

'Not Biological'

(from page 5)

between the selection, for and against, individuals within a species and the generalization that "some species die out, new ones arise and spread." This is very misleading, and it may have something to do with your trying to expand the usage of the terms natural selection and evolutionary biology **to include**, as opposed **to be included**, within the construct of the history of human cultures.)

Your account of "human evolution" is not current. And it makes the same mistake sociobiologists make, namely, by means of imagination we piece together events and processes about which we know little. This is the very meaning of metaphysics . . . bits and pieces of reality sewn together with idealism and guesswork. From my perspective we've got to be tough on ourselves in this arena, for if there is a basic flaw to bourgeois science it is the infusion of metaphysics into it, to the extent that the scientists themselves often can't distinguish the real from the apparent.

The basic difference between genetic and non-genetic "traits" is that children reared in isolation from their parent culture retain all of their gene-caused phenotypes and none of the non-genetic ones, including language, ethics, philosophy, politics, technology or science. This is an important difference. You need a group to "inherit culture," but only parents to inherit genes. These are different phenomena. They may be related in some way but we don't know what way, or at least I don't. I agree with you, tooth and nail, that language, art, ethics, politics, technology, etc. are learned, and that as societies learn more they become better "adapted," but the use of the word adaptation in this context is **qualitatively different** from its usage in evolutionary theory wherein the word implies the fixation of genes within gene pools. Even physiological adaptation (increase in number of red blood cells in response to nicotine or high altitudes is a physiological adaptation that in no way alters the frequency of genes within gene pools) has a qualitatively different meaning. So, when we use the word adaptation within the context of societies adapting through acquisition of knowledge (experience), let's not confuse contexts and liken such a process to changing gene pools, or speciation, or even the origin of life.

Further on you come close to negating all you have said up to then. Now, the fifth paragraph from the end is where we diverge. As stated earlier, natural selection as used by Darwin isn't the process by which cultural information is selected and weeded. There are two processes that may have some external surface similarity. So, in effect I must disagree with the last two sentences of that paragraph. This, then, leads me to disagree with the argument developed in the paragraphs which follow. There doesn't seem to be a difference between us about capitalism but there is about your extension of the meaning of natural selection. I don't see the need to do this. In developing a Marxist analysis of human history, which has been done to a certain extent, we must use words and phrases that aptly describe the phenomena discovered, not borrow words that have been used to describe different phenomena. However, the feeling I have about borrowing words and ideas developed during the discovery of simple phenomena to describe complex phenomena is not my primary disagreement. My primary disagreement is allowing loopholes through which determinists can nullify all human experience. It matters not whether one pushes genetic or technological determinism—both negate dialectical materialism and the communist outlook. When you apply natural selection to the Marxian position that experiences (socialization) determines behavior you come close to technological determinism.

In the last paragraph where you quote me saying "If human social behavior is adaptive, then it must be caused by the genes," you are quoting precisely the meaning that Wilson gives to the application of natural selection to human behavior. That is what he is saying . . . behavior is caused by genes. And that's exactly what he should be saying given the premise that behavior is adaptive . . . **because that is what the words mean.** And you haven't, as you claim, shown otherwise. What you have done is to use Darwin's words to describe Marx's thesis of the history of humankind.

Your footnote, again, is an admixture of terms taken from different contexts. I would say that most human characteristics arise as functions of interaction and covariance among genes and aspects of experience and environments. To date there is no way to tease apart the components of variance of behaviorial traits, nor is there a way to measure interaction and covariance of genes and environments within human populations. However, I don't think we need to know these technicalities in order to understand Marxism and revolutionary theory. As you say, socialism is not just another "species of idea" that we hope to water and fertilize that it will compete well with capitalism . . . capitalism will be smashed. You don't need to understand Darwin to smash capitalism. However, in order to win workers to smash capitalism it is necessary to put revolutionary theory into their "hearts and minds" thereby transforming ideas into physical force. Revolutionary theory includes an understanding of human history and the origins of human culture. I am in absolute agreement with you on this point. What I am saying is two pronged: first, the theory of evolution as it is understood today is a limited domain. It explains somewhat well how genetic variation arises, how gene pools change in composition, how species arise, and how organic molecules arise. It is not foolproof in any of these areas, but it's a pretty good theory. Second, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, charlatans, mathematicians and industrialists have tried their damnedest to **adapt the determinist aspects of evolution to human behavior, human institutions and human societies. This tendency is dangerous. My concern about your piece is that it too shows this tendency.** So with my present understanding I will champion any progress toward developing a more complete Marxist understanding of human history, but fight tooth and nail any attempt to biologize that analysis. I'm glad you sent me your comments. It is good for all of us to dig deeper into this area for a better communist understanding. I'd like to continue the discussion with you.

Comradely, MQ

Turn the Guns Around!

Class Warfare, Not Draft Resistance

In the Middle East, the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia—everywhere in fact—the rivalry among the imperialist powers, and especially between the United States and the Soviet Union, holds the promise of war. Whether it begins through direct attacks upon each other, or whether it develops from a smaller war between their clients, there will be war, and the armies of the bosses on both sides will need to turn millions of workers into soldiers. It is in this context that we must sharpen and strengthen our Party's work in the imperialist military.

The history of revolutionary upheavals illustrates the necessity of a strong base in the bosses' military machine. The success of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 owed much to the correct work of the Party in winning large sections of the Czarist military to the side of revolution, and politically neutralizing others.

More recently, too, there have been mass rebellions in the armed forces. At the end of World War II in Europe, thousands of GIs took part in uprisings against being sent to Asia to fight the Soviet Union instead of going home. During the Vietnam War, "fraggings" of officers were common, and whole units refused to go into combat. Even in "peacetime" there have been large GI and sailors' rebellions against racism within the military. These rebellions have even taken place on Navy ships at sea, forcing them to return to port. At a number of bases recently there have been mass refusals to even sing the bosses' national anthem.

The army is one of the main props of the ruling class state apparatus. Without a committed military apparatus the bosses are vastly weakened as they attempt to hold and expand power.

Conversely, the working class needs an armed people—a Red Army—in order to win state power. A good place to begin building this process is in the bosses' military. There, workers are impressed into the military. Their contradictions with capitalist society, already deep, are sharpened in the military by racism, the threat of being maimed or killed, and the knowledge that their families at home are forced to live under worse conditions.

These contradictions, and others, create a great opportunity for us to work among these workers and win them to the side of the revolution. This is important in and of itself. However, winning soldiers and sailors has additional facets. In the military workers are armed and trained to use weapons. These guns can be turned on the bosses who gave them to the workers. A basic strategy of our party for revolution is the need for armed struggle. Workers who are armed and trained to fight, and who will fight around our strategy and tactics are crucial to the working class. Consequently, the party's strategy of working in the armed forces is important to making and winning revolution.

In this period of nuclear weapons and nuclear war this perspective has even greater urgency. Nuclear war does not change the fundamental strategy for revolutionaries and workers. A large political base for revolution is necessary

for revolutionary victory under any circumstances. Unquestionably, nuclear war poses the chance of greater damage through imperialist war than ever before. Having a base in the military will have a great effect in determining the extent of nuclear damage as a result of imperialist war.

It is important to remember that nuclear war is not waged by a handful of technocrats sitting in secure bunkers pushing buttons that release nuclear devastation. Nuclear war is waged by tens of thousands of troops at missile sites, on atomic subs, in the Air Force, in the transfer of materials and weapons to these areas, and by the hundreds of thousands of workers who manufacture nuclear weapons. All of these people are as susceptible to the aforementioned contradictions as anyone else. These people can be won over to the cause of revolution or neutralized in their efforts for the bosses. Moreover, these people, are closely linked to all the other areas of the military and working class, so rebellions in other areas of work in the military or in the class struggle generally, will have an effect on those who are directly in control of nuclear weaponry.

World War III, even nuclear war, will stir up class hatred to untold heights.

If nuclear war has created the possibility for greater damage it also creates the possibility for quicker victory by the forces of revolution. Workers and others will no longer be lulled into the passivity by the idea that this country will be untouched by war. People will act more quickly and decisively when faced by the stark reality of mass destruction. This set of circumstances can increase our Party's ability to take advantage of war, especially nuclear war.

WWIII, even nuclear war, will stir up class hatred to untold heights. An enraged working class, led by a resolute revolutionary party, can wipe the brutal imperialists off the face of the earth. Our party can and will make a difference in war, any type of war. Each force of ours in the military will explode to thousands given a correct line. Our forces are few today. With better work and the unfolding of the class struggle, we will be able to play the decisive role tomorrow. One might say that the imperialists will start WWIII, but the working class, led by our party, can finish it!

REGISTRATION OR RESISTANCE

At a previous National Committee meeting our party made a serious error. The National Committee was swept away by the partially-good development of resistance to registration for the forthcoming draft. We developed two diametrically different positions. Our line for party members was "Turn the guns around." And the line we advocated in the mass movement, and especially through InCAR was "don't register; don't go into the bosses' army." If we are to build a mass movement around an opportunist line of "don't go," it certainly would undercut our ability to win workers who join the party from our mass work to go into the army, especially after we told them not to register, and not to go into the military.

On the day of registration for the draft, our party and InCAR were espousing pretty much the same positions as the various revisionists and pacifists. At this point we must ask: Can the strategy of armed struggle be better fulfilled with workers who are in the military, or with draft resisters? We think the answer is obvious.

Our point of concentration is in the military—not among draft dodgers or resisters. This is not to say that we won't work with or try to recruit workers and students who resist going into the armed forces. But we are not going after them in "hot pursuit" into Canada or Mexico. Our line in the party and in the mass movement must be a unified whole. We should be building anti-racist and party units in the armed forces. This does not rule out activities against recruiters on the campuses etc. These recruiters are building support for the bosses' war plans, not winning workers to organize inside the army against the bosses.

Some reasons for the error we made are the following:

- Lack of confidence in the working class. Some people feel that it is futile for a handful of people to try to win workers to turn the guns around.
- Some feel that the best we do is to screw up the bosses' attempts to build their army. At least this would limit the imperialists' efforts.
- There is a great deal of pacifism in our ranks, and a fear of physical combat, be it with weapons or fists.
- Some of us have lost the goal or vision that our party is after power. Without success in sections of the military this goal is virtually impossible.

Draft resistance and evasion will not stop the "economic draft" that sweeps hundreds of thousands of working-class youth into the military. Communists must be inside, organizing for revolution, among these workers.

• Others feel that there is not much that we can do in the face of overwhelming forces, especially the two super-powers. This negates the reality that every party member, and all the workers whom we influence to fight **can make a difference!** Sometimes we tend to view things statically—as they are. We fail to understand the power of our ideas and actions.

• As previously pointed out we fail to grasp the contradictions workers in the military have with the bosses. For instance: Hundreds of thousands of black, Latin, and white youth are in the military only because there are no jobs. They are not there to save U.S. imperialism. The failure of capitalism has forced them into the Army. Consequently, the draft is already a reality for them. It is a racist economic draft. We must be at the side of our most-oppressed class brothers and sister. Not to do so is racist. Let us remember that during the Vietnam War our members gave up the racist and anti-working class 2s (student deferment) status that the bosses offered to white middle-class college students. Many of our members went in, and tried to win their base to do likewise. To retreat from that position now would reduce us to just another pacifist grouping.

The National Committee reversed the incorrect position adopted at its previous meeting. We decided to advocate our line in the mass movement as well as in the party. We reaffirmed the decisions of the 1978 party convention which called for a concentration in the military equal to our industrial concentrations. We recognized that most of our work prior to the registration week was anti-imperialist. However, we noted that may of the positions advocated by party members in InCAR were wrong and helped lead to the incorrect line of "don't register, don't go." We adopted or proposed some slogans that would correct this error, and focus on the idea of building anti-racist, anti-imperialist formations in the military. We view this process as early steps towards building the new Red Army.

Our role is not defensive, but offensive. We adopt strategies for the mass movement or advocate those which lead the working class to state power. Socialist revolution is our goal. Nothing less is acceptable!

During the past few months our forces in the military have grown modestly. In addition, many letters and requests come to the party from military forces who have seen our material, or who have met members or friends. This trickle is a forerunner of the flood to come.

We **can turn** the guns around for class war for socialism when we realize the power of the working class and the power of Marxism-Leninism. PL★

By G.S.

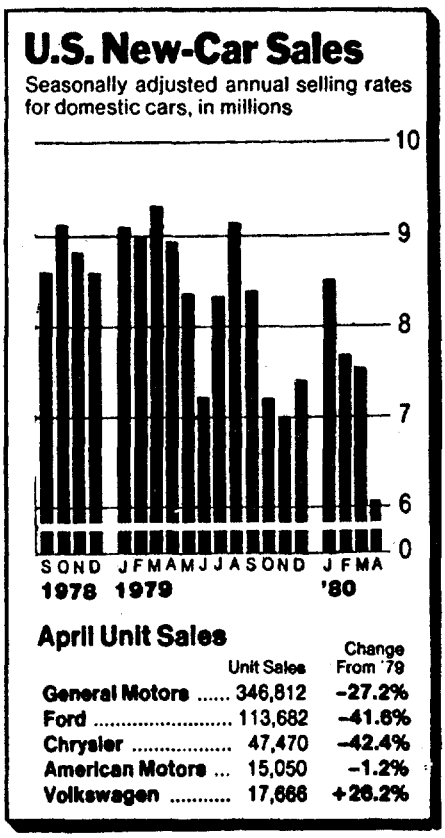
Building a Base

Bosses' Auto Crisis– Our Opportunity

U.S. imperialism continues to crumble at an alarming rate. The U.S. bosses have all but lost their grip on Mideast oil, their economy is in a shambles, the contradictions within the ruling class are sharpening, their huge investments bearing little fruit and it is growing increasingly hard to tell their "allies" from their "enemies." What started in the 70's as a "strategic decline" has now, in the 80's blossomed into an avalanche. The empire is crumbling in huge blocks. Nowhere is this more evident than in the auto industry, the heart of the U.S. capitalist system.

As the economy continues to speed into a depression, the auto industry, always the pace setter, is already there. The week of May 11, saw total layoffs in the industry soar to 294,000, matching the peak of the 1975 recession. This is well over a third of the workforce, and the worst is yet to come. Of this figure, GM has laid off 149,000 workers (110,000 indefinitely), Ford has laid off 76,000 (51,000 indefinitely, and Chrysler has 42,000 on indefinite layoff. The rest can be accounted for by Chrysler "short-term" layoffs, and the same for AMC. In addition to the layoffs, there have been over 21,000 dismissals by the Big 3 (workers who will never be called back), and every day, as workers' time on layoff exceeds their time of service, they are dropped from the layoff figures. GM alone, since Jan. 1, has cut 21 shifts. By the summer, over 40,000 salaried jobs will have been permanently lost, dwarfing the number in '74-'75, which at the time was considered astronomical.

Sales for the U.S. auto barons are presently at their lowest since '74-'75. Industry sales in March dropped to a yearly average of 6 million, worse than the pits of the '75 recession. In mid-April, sales plunged 33%, running at a yearly average of only 5.7 million. Not only is this



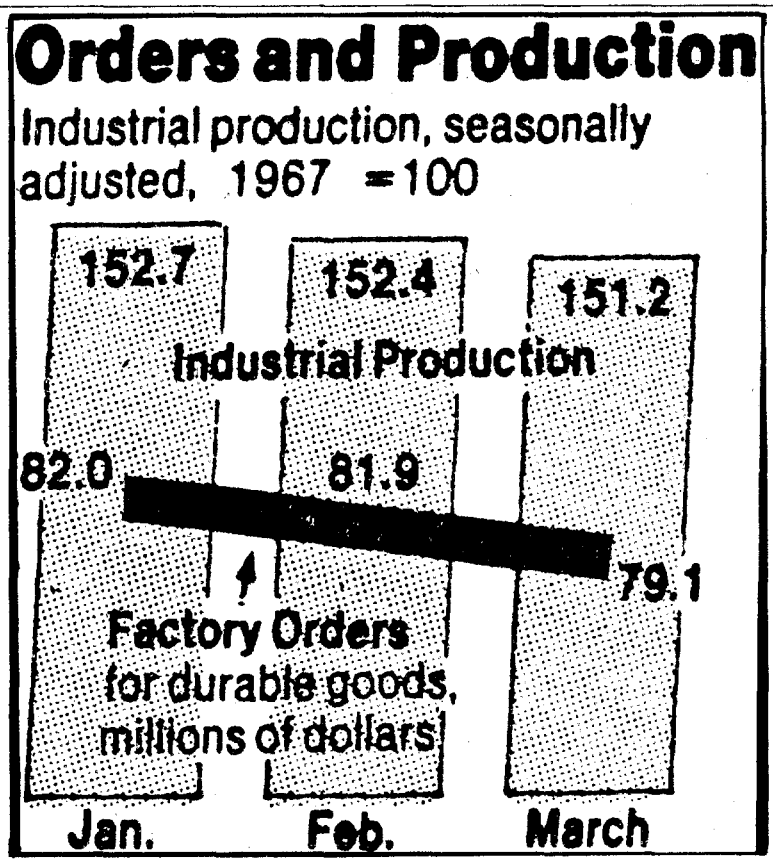
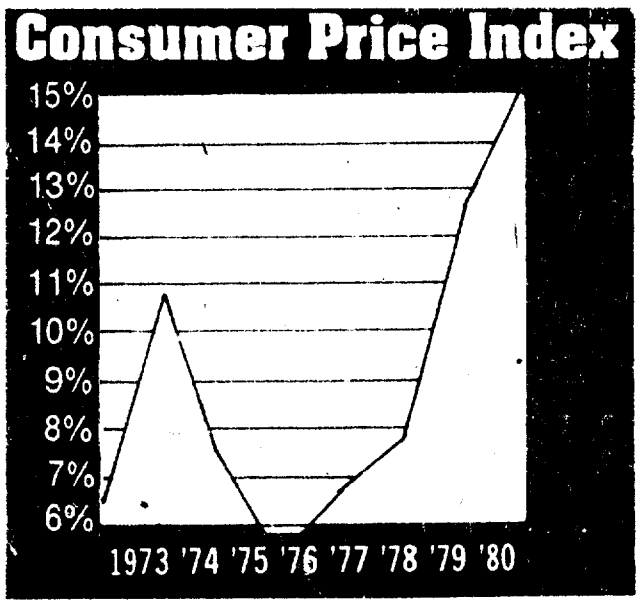


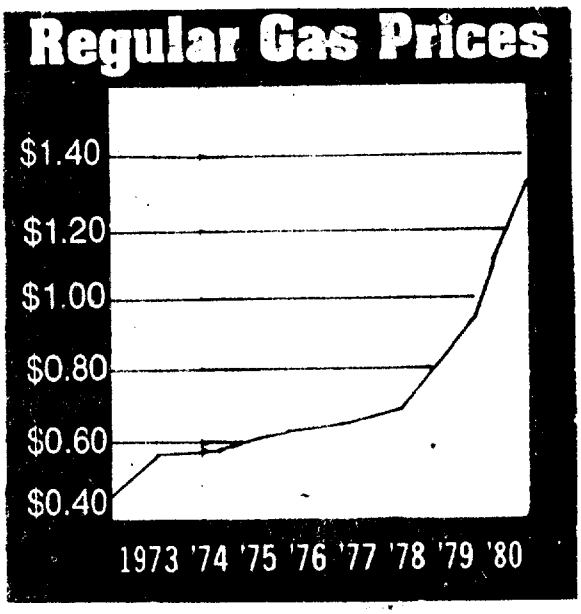
figure lower than in November '75, but it comes at a time when sales have historically peaked. Total U.S. sales dropped 27% for the month of April, again dropping the Big 3 to their lowest '75 levels. Imports dropped 20,000 from last year, but increased their share of the U.S. market from 22.6% to 27.2%. GM dropped 27%, Ford and Chrysler were both down over 41%, and AMC dropped 17%. VW of America increased sales 26% (if you can call that a victory for U.S. auto bosses). Not only are these figures below the '75 sales, but late April sales actually came in below April '75, when things started to pick up for the industry. GM, whose profits dropped 88% in the first quarter, to $155 million, may actually lose $145 million in the second quarter. The last time GM showed a quarterly loss was in the '70 strike, when they were shut down for almost the entire fourth quarter, and lost $135 million. Furthermore, back-to-back sales drops for the industry, two years in a row would be the worst in industry history. The prospects for the rest of the year are that the total U.S. market, by far the world's largest and vital to all the auto makers, will show the Big 3 at a low, and the imports at a peak.

GENERAL MOTORS: KING OF THE HILL

GM, far and away the king of the industry, is having more than its share of problems, although it is not "on the verge" as Chrysler is or Ford is soon to be. As stated earlier, GM is responsible for 110,000 indefinite layoffs, more than half the national total in auto. They are struggling to maintain their 46% share of the U.S. market through layoffs, wiping out 21 shifts since January 1, cutting production of passenger cars by 20% and production of light trucks by 50%. Also as stated earlier, GM's earnings plunged 88% in the first quarter of this year, down to $155 million from last years' $1.26 billion for the first quarter, reflecting the ever-worsening conditions in the industry. GM could show a second quarter loss of $145 million, and the company's top officers, Estes and Murphy, do not expect things to show any improvement for the rest of the model years.

Clearly the bright spot for GM has been the sales of their X-cars, such as the Chevrolet Citation, a small, light, front-wheel drive model. Their hopes for next year and beyond rest with a two-pronged attack. First is the production of their J-car, to be built at the Southgate plant. The second is a major assault on European markets. The irony of the "good news" for GM is that the X-car hasn't made a dent in the imports. What's good for GM is not so good for Ford and Chrysler—the X-car has cut into their sales. Estimates are that the Big 3 have sustained permanent losses at home, and that therefore, they are mainly fighting among themselves for a sharply reduced U.S. market. The J-car will be competing mostly with Chrysler's K-car and Ford's "Erica." GM's European assault will probably cut mostly into Ford's share of the market (the only thing that kept Ford out of the red in 1979). Chrysler has al-





ready unloaded all of its overseas operations.

Also, as GM turns more and more to the small car, the rate of unemployment will continue to rise, not fall. First, it takes far fewer workers to produce the smaller cars, and the workforce could permanently drop by 300,000 in the next few years. This toll will carry far beyond auto. For example, the **Wall Street Journal** of Dec. 21, 1979 estimates, that for GM, by 1987,

> Steel poundage per car will drop from 2,083 lbs. to 1,688. Iron poundage will drop from 625 to 293. Smaller tires will mean 16% less rubber. Glass will be thinner and there will be less of it, meaning a 14% reduction in glass. Aluminum and plastics will increase, but nowhere near to offset the general economic effect of reduced demand for heavier items.

This is on top of the attacks steel and rubber bosses are already facing from imports, inflation, old plants and mills, and present low auto sales. We know what this will mean and is already meaning to workers in these industries; plant closings and layoffs are already the order of the day.

For the first half of 1979 (the latest figures available), GM sold 1,029,000 cars overseas, while Ford sold 1,197,000. The difference here is that Ford is on the decline in overseas sales while GM is looking to make a big push forward. Again, this will probably be at Ford's expense. But it is with this in mind that GM has steadfastly opposed any action against Japanese imports in the U.S., fearing that it might begin a trade war and severely hurt their chances for increasing their penetration of the European market. Ford on the other hand, is just as eager to keep GM out of Europe as they are to keep the Japanese out of the U.S. UAW President Douglas Fraser, wearing his Ford and Chrysler hats, is crying the loudest for import restrictions.

The question of import restrictions seems to represent yet another crackup in the ruling class. There are many variables that enter into this question that go beyond the narrow self-interest of GM or Ford. The ruling class will act in its class interest even if that is in contradiction to one or another boss, which in this case is a lot more than Macy's vs. Gimbels. Depending on these variables who gets elected in November, the continuing decline of the industry as a whole, the ups and downs of Ford vs. GM, the continued advances of the imports, the continued deepening of the entire capitalist crisis, the prospects of Chrysler and/or Ford lopping off even more workers by the thousands and the possibility of rebellions in major cities like Detroit, and many more—the ruling class will take a stand that will either aid Ford or aid GM. But either way, the power of the industry will continue to falter and decline.

GM may still be king, but it is the king of an ever weakening U.S. auto empire. It's like comparing the Shah of '68 to the Shah of '78. We must guard against overestimating GM's strength. It would be an illusion to think that because GM may be the only auto maker to survive in the crisis in auto, in its present form that they are "strong." They, along with their industry and their system are growing strategically weaker, and therefore more desperate. Taking the market from Ford and Chrysler may temporarily keep them "on top," but it will not strengthen the U.S. share of the market or strengthen U.S. imperialism.

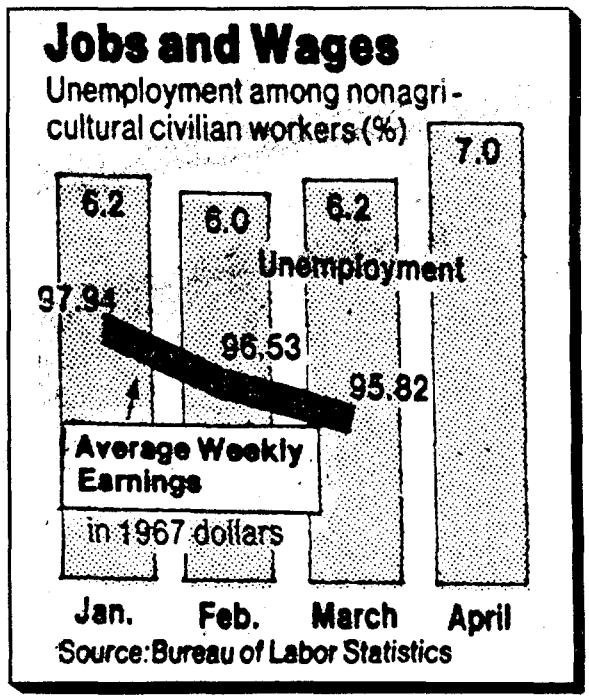
FORD: A BATTERED IDEA

Ford, the No. 2 auto baron, is on the ropes. If GM is sputtering, Ford is stalled. If Chrysler is on

its death bed, Ford is in intensive care. In 1979, Ford dropped to 21% of the U.S. market, falling behind the imports. Since January, it has dropped further to 18%, where Chrysler was 10 years ago. A two-point drop in the market is worth over $1.5 billion in sales and hundreds of millions in profit. Ford lost $41 million in the fourth quarter of '79 and $1 billion on its North American operation for the year. So far this year, Ford sales are down 31% from last year in the U.S., and they are running at a clip which will mean a $2 billion loss in North America, double last year's. They also stand to lose three-quarters of a billion dollars overall, their first such loss in 35 years. Ford lost $164 million in the first quarter this year on U.S. sales, compared to a $595 million profit in last year's first quarter. There are over 51,000 Ford workers on indefinite layoff, 50% more than in the depths of the '75 recession. This figure does not include the dismissals from plant closings, like the nearly 4,000 Mahwah workers. Ford's first quarter losses would have gone even deeper had it not been for a recently-signed tax treaty between the U.S. and England.

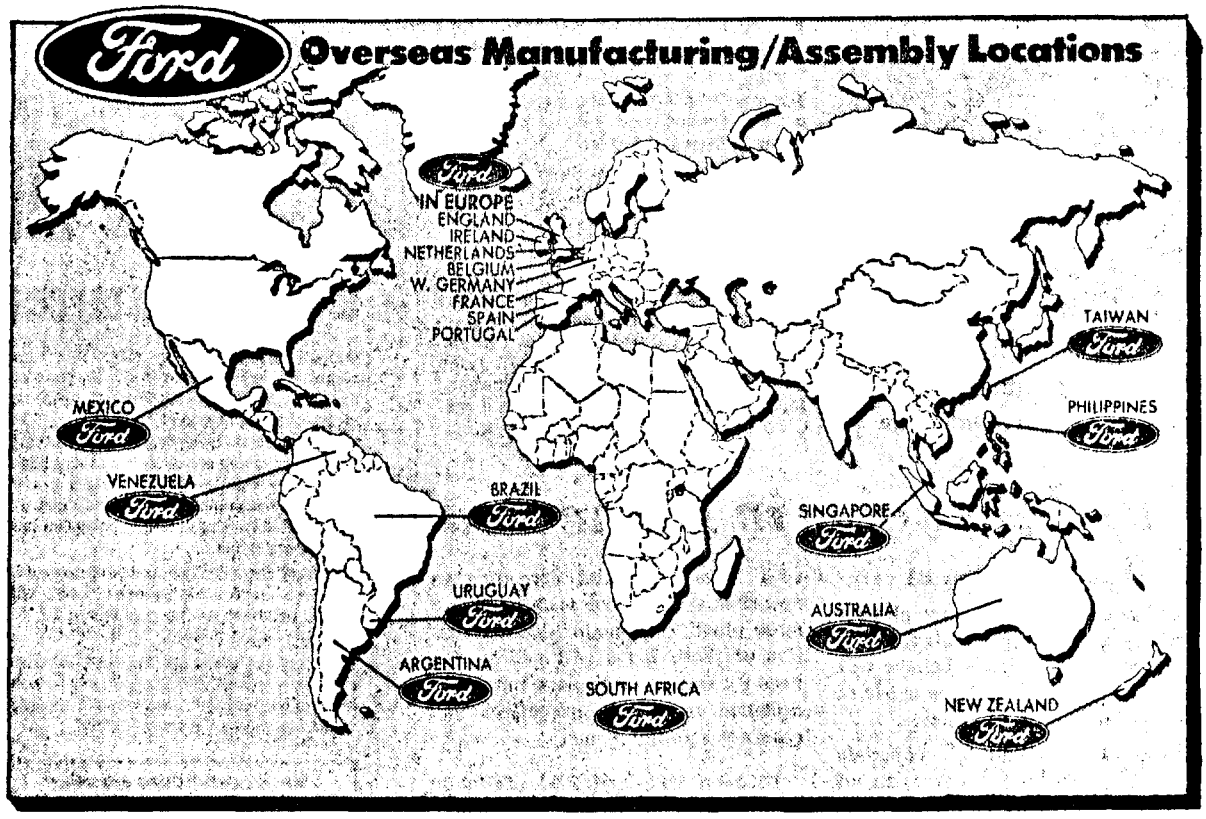
Basically, Ford had two things going for it that separated it from Chrysler; 1) a $2.5 billion cash reserve, and 2) healthy overseas sales. Both of these now appear to be fading fast. Ford is the most diversified of the auto makers. They are the 9th largest steel producer in the U.S., and the 2nd largest producer of flat glass: They are one of the world's largest producers of iron, steel, and aluminum castings; and the 2nd largest North American producer of plastic components and auto paint. They are the largest North American producers of vinyl materials, they have growing electronic and electrical businesses, are one of the world's largest tractor builders, and have a major aerospace and communications subsidiary. This diversification plus their overseas sales gave them the $2.5 billion reserve. But last years' billion dollar loss in North America, and this year's projected $750 million loss overall will begin to eat that up. By '81, Ford will be beating a path to the government.

Secondly, Ford's much-heralded overseas empire is beginning to crack. Ford West Germany, the company's largest subsidiary, made roughly $5.3 billion in sales in 1979. But Ford's share of the German market has continued to drop from a high of 15% in 1976 and is expected to sink below 9% in 1980. It is yielding most of its share to VW and Japanese imports, and, as stated earlier, GM is ready to take some more. This not only means less cash to send back to Detroit, but also that Ford may have permanently lost the market gains it made in the 70's. West German gas prices are at $2.50/gallon, and Ford's big Granada has dropped 30% in sales so far this year. But even Ford's 35 mile-per-gallon Escort is in deep trouble, having dropped from 60,000 sales in '76 to 20,000 in '79.



The competition is hot and the Japanese plan to boost their share of the market to 9%, surpassing Ford in Germany and making a comeback for them very hard. Overall Ford sales in Germany are down 20% for the first quarter of the year. Sales in England, Ford's second largest overseas market are down 1.6%. In addition, Ford failed to make projected sales gains in France and Italy. Europe is not Ford country. What hasn't been lost to the competition in Europe is being lost to the class struggle in Latin America. Strikes like the one just ended in Brazil, have Ford bosses yelping about "increased costs of labor and materials." Outside North America for the first quarter of this year, profits were down 9.1% from last year.

That's not the end of their problems. Ford is the only U.S. automaker without a single front-wheel-drive model. Ford had planned to spend $14 billion between now and '84 getting new models out, but with costs up, and income down, Ford bosses are in the soup. They have no way left to bail out but to cut back. In the past few months, Ford permanently closed five plants including the one at Mahwah. This, plus other cuts in other plants, will permanently cut 9,000 workers from the rolls (dismissals, not layoffs). Another 6,100 white collar jobs were cut, 11% of the North American total. In addition, Ford has cut its North American budget between now and '84 by $2.5 billion which will postpone maintainance at some plants and postpone expansion of others (WSJ 5/9). Instead of the anticipated $14 billion to spend, they have now cut that down to $10 billion. As the auto crisis deepens, Ford will fall further behind, needing more money to catch up, but having less to spend. It seems as if the Big 3 will have to find another name to go by.



CHRYSLER: RUNNING ON EMPTY

Chrysler as we've known it, is dead. If it is true that one capitalist kills many, it is also true that many capitalists have killed Chrysler. Going into the capitalist crisis in the weakest position, with the oldest plants and the least cash, and having been gobbled up in the market by GM and the Germans and Japanese, if Chrysler does survive it will indeed be a "new Chrysler"—permanently smaller and weaker. And there is no guarantee it will survive at all.

Back in '78, Chrysler lost $204.6 million. Last year that mushroomed to a $1.1 billion loss, the highest ever in U.S. history. In the first quarter of this year, **Chrysler lost $449 million or $14,000-a-minute!** That means if things stay the same, Chrysler would lose about $1.8 billion this year, more than the Federal loan guarantee they just got. Chrysler has 43,000 workers on indefinite layoff and it is estimated that there will be a permanent cut of at least 30% of what once was 100,000 workers. That's if Chrysler makes it. As part of its efforts to cut costs, Chrysler has announced two more plant closings; their truck plant in Fenton, Mo. (outside St. Louis), and their engine plant in Windsor, Ontario. This means at least another 2,500 jobs permanently cut. Chrysler sales for the first quarter dropped 41% over last year to 9.5% of the U.S. market. Altogether Chrysler has shut six plants in the last nine months, and more are set to go. Chrysler will soon be shutting the Lynch Rd. Plant and will decide further down the road whether it will ever open again.

Chrysler no longer holds a majority share in any of their overseas operations. VW bought them out in Brazil, Peugot in Europe, and Mitsubishi of Japan recently took over their Australian subsidiary (Chrysler owns a 15% share of Mitsubishi and markets their products in the U.S.). This means that Chrysler is now a domestic company and is hinging its survival totally on the sale of their new K-car on the U.S. market—not a very sure bet. If losses continue through '81, and the crisis deepens both for the industry and the whole economy (and every indication is that it will) and Chrysler can not sell the anticipated 500,000 K-cars, then they will have totally exhausted all their Federal and state loans, and could very well go under. Of course, there are other ingredients that enter into the picture: how much more the bosses can rip out of the hides of Chrysler workers, the impact on Detroit if Chrysler goes, the prospects of thousands of unemployed auto workers in the streets fighting the cops when the bosses want them fighting in the Middle East, etc.

All this said, there are really two important aspects of Chrysler's demise. First is the effect that it is having, and will continue to have on Detroit, and the implications for our work, and how that can affect the total picture. We'll deal more with this later, focusing on Detroit. The other aspect is, that as Chrysler continues to decline, being the weakest auto boss, it becomes a test tube study for the development of fascism in the industry, in the UAW, and in the country as a

whole.

The '79 Chrysler contract was a taste of what the bosses have in store for all workers as U.S. imperialism becomes one big Chrysler. The no-strike promise, the $462 million give-away (half "negotiated," half-government mandated), the plant closings and layoffs while negotiations were going on, the "sacrifice for the boss" line of the union, the tremendous increase in attacks once it was clear the workers had been totally disarmed, and finally, Fraser's ascension to the Chrysler board, are all in store, not just for GM and Ford workers in '82, but for all workers, everywhere. As has been noted before, the state mandating contracts will become much more commonplace as the crisis deepens and more bosses turn to their government for help.

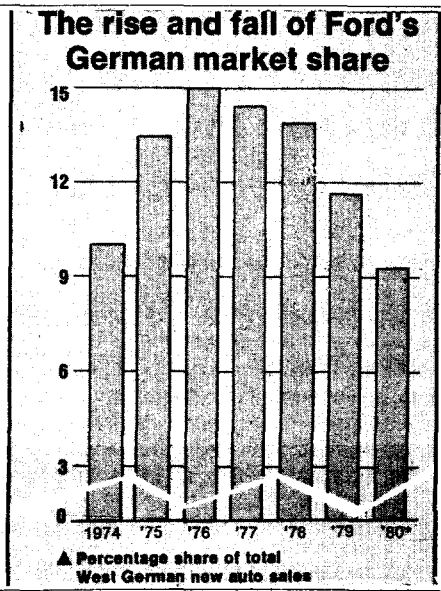
As Chrysler continues to be kept alive, the bosses and their government will continue to institute fascist measures and set precedents before they "pull the plug." The deeper Chrysler sinks, the more Chrysler workers will be attacked to "save jobs." In '79 the bosses began raising the slogan (which has picked up momentum since then), that COLA should be linked to productivity. The **Wall Street Journal** has adopted the position that "re-industrialization calls for new labor relations policies" meaning more "business-labor-government cooperation." As far back as last December, the WSJ said that the UAW might have to double the $462 million "sacrifice" to save the company. It is certainly not out of the question that within the year, after Chrysler has made further cuts in plants, production, jobs, and re-tooling, that Fraser, who would now "know the inside story," would come back and re-open the Chrysler contract again, taking even more out of it, either by agreeing to a wage freeze (which he and Kennedy are both for), or some other give-away as a "last ditch effort to save the jobs of Chrysler workers."

IMPORTS: MOVING UP FAST

You can't have a loser without a winner, and in the inter-imperialist dogfight taking place in the auto industry, the Japanese and Germans are winning. This section of this article will be somewhat limited in scope as it will not deal in depth with the world economic crisis as it exists internally in Japan or Germany, but will deal mostly with the fight for the U.S. market.

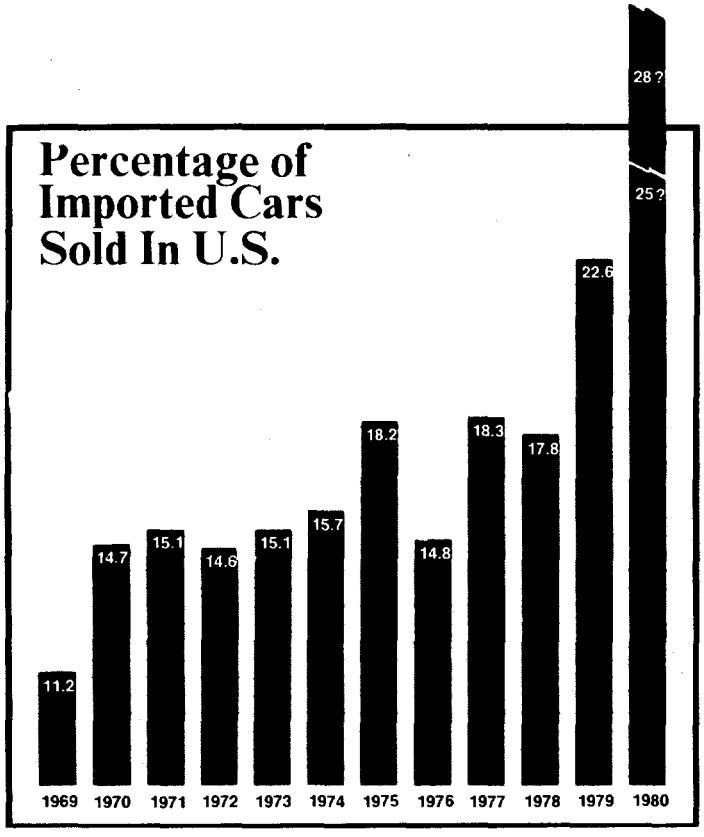
Last year, imports collectively took over 22% of the U.S. auto market, which as stated before, is by far the world's largest, accounting for about $80 billion in total sales. This moved the imports into the number 2 spot, as Ford dropped off to 21%. Toyota alone, came in third behind GM and Ford, and VW came in ahead of AMC. This year imports have jumped up to over 27%, more than Ford and Chrysler combined. By '81, it is possible that imports could account for over 30% in sales and that could be permanent. This signals a real collapse in the U.S. auto industry, where historically one or two points in sales has been a tremendous struggle. This rapid advance, maybe as much as ten points in two years, (100% since 1978) would be a real rout for U.S. bosses, right on their home turf. A clear indication of the degree of this rout, is that presently in California, the largest market in the U.S., imports are taking over 35% of the new sales.

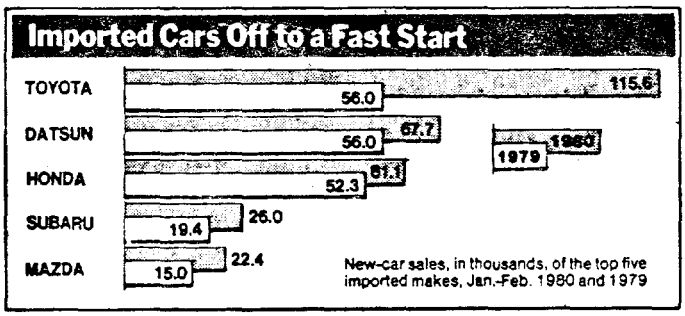
The barrage against U.S. bosses continues. In February, Japanese exports to the U.S. were up 34% over February '79, and total Japanese exports were up a record 42.5%, or 486,000 units in the month. The U.S. got the lion's share of the total imports, 42.2%, but demand was also strong in the Middle East and Asia. This is not just good news for Japanese auto bosses, but for the whole Japanese ruling class. Auto is one of the main lynchpins of the Japanese economy, and auto is the single largest source of export income for

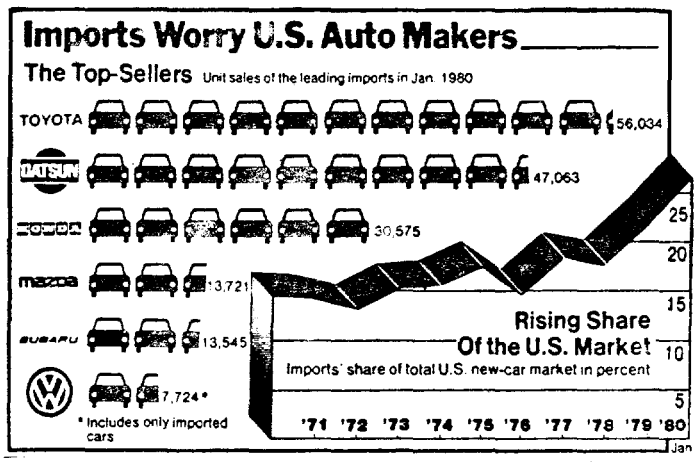


Japan at about $25 billion. This turn of events isn't doing much to strengthen the U.S.-Japanese alliance. The U.S. is Japan's main trade partner, and according to the **New York Times** (3/27/80), the present "car wars" is the "biggest problem in American-Japanese economic relations." It should also be noted that while the U.S. auto industry is sinking fast, Toyota and Nissan, the two biggest auto makers in Japan, are recording record production figures.

One indication of how thin the ties with the bosses' allies really are, is that Japanese auto bosses, kingpins of the Japanese ruling class, view the demise of U.S. auto bosses and all of U.S. imperialism, as a stroke of luck. "Our feeling is that we have been very, very lucky in the United States," a senior executive for Toyota said. "We could hardly predict the double oil crises of the 1970's would make our type of cars so attractive to American consumers. We just can't be sure that







our lucky streak will continue long enough to justify initial investments in the range of $500 million." **New York Times** 2/16/80. Now, after establishing a secure beachhead, and pretty much assured that their "luck" will continue, the Japanese are now moving in their money and factories.

Honda decided to build an assembly plant in Marysville, Ohio, and Nissan, the builder of Datsuns (No. 2 in Japan), will invest $300 million in an assembly plant for small trucks. In the first quarter of this year, sales of imported small trucks jumped a record 29% while U.S. small truck sales plunged 36% from last year's first quarter and production of U.S. small trucks has been cut 50%. To underline the dominance of the market by the Japanese, all U.S. auto companies are presently importing Japanese made small trucks and selling them under U.S. labels. Nobody expects to be able to compete except GM, and then not until 1982. Toyota, Japan's biggest auto boss, already operates a small truck plant in Long Beach, California, West Germany's VW is producing Rabbits and

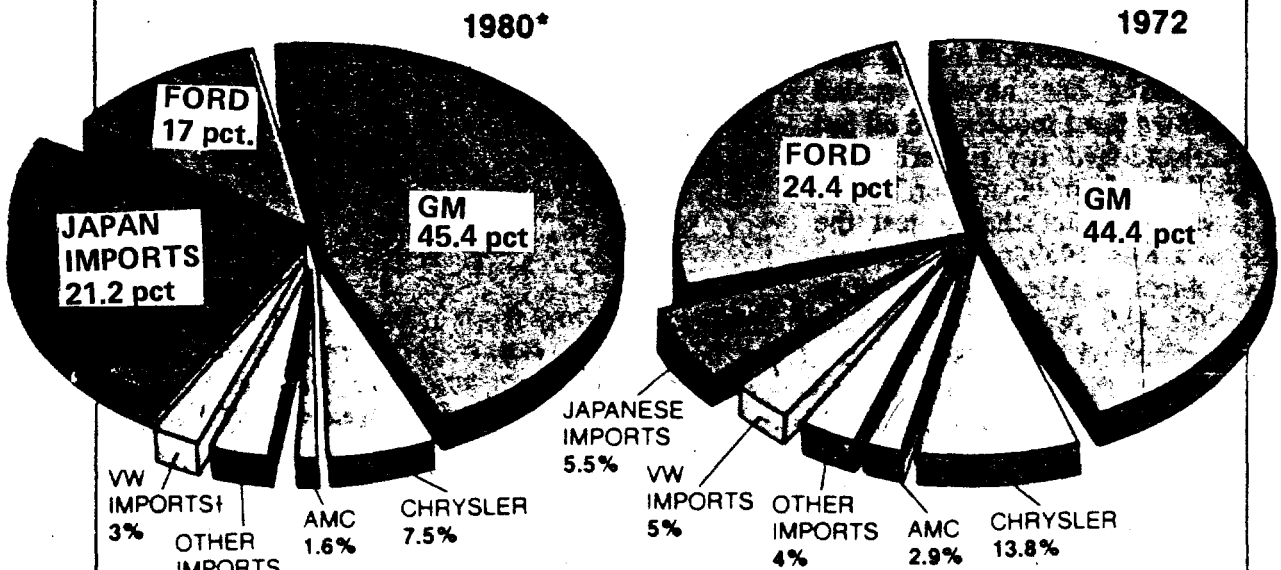
The UAW has become an organ of fascism. When our day comes, no punishment will be too great for them.

small trucks at its plant in Pennsylvania, and is opening a second plant in Sterling Heights, Michigan, just outside Detroit. The new Nissan plant will turn out about 10,000 units a month, and will be built on 500 acres of land, so that a car assembly plant can be added. (In 1977, color television import quotas were established, forcing virtually all Japanese, television makers to build plants in the U.S. As a result, the Japanese now dominate the industry.

Volkswagen is also gearing up to take more away from their "allies" in the U.S. Their strategy for the '80's is to increase and expand auto production outside of West Germany, especially in North and South America while at the same time freeing their German factories for a stepped-up assault on European markets. The "battle for Europe" consists of trying to combat Japanese competition that is rising sharply, and establishing an increased share of the market before the U.S. companies, mainly GM, can retool and make their European push. Ford, as previously noted, con-

HOW JAPAN CUTS INTO THE YANKEE PIE

In 1972, before the first fuel crunch, imported cars were no threat to U.S. automakers. But now Japan alone is bigger than Ford—and Chrysler is nearly bankrupt.



†Includes cars assembled in U.S. *Latest available figure Source: Automotive News

tinues to slip in Europe.

VW, West Germany's largest auto builder, increased its worldwide sales in 1979 by 15%. Profits were up 28.4% and they had a record production year. VW is hoping to move up to 15% of the European market from their present 13%. This will most probably come more at Ford's expense than anyone elses. So far, in the first quarter of this year, worldwide sales are up 3.4% and shipments to Western European nations outside of Germany are up 10%. The weakest spots for VW in the first quarter have been in their two most important markets, West Germany and the U.S. In Germany sales were down 11% from last year, and the U.S. sales were down 10%. VW hopes to have totally segregated their European operation from the American operation, allowing them to focus more fire in Europe. VW might build an engine plant in the U.S. while continuing to import engines from their Mexican plant for U.S. made Rabbits. Also, VW recently purchased Triumph-Adler, and Chrysler Brasil.

Relative new-comers to the fray are the French auto bosses. Renault, the government owned French auto maker, recently got 22.5% of AMC for $150 million, making them the biggest share holder. Peugeot bought out Chrysler's European subsidiaries and has already loaned Chrysler $100 million, with another loan presently in the works.

UAW: LEADER OF THE PACK

When it's time to talk about the UAW (United Auto Workers Leadership) and their role in all of this, anger and frustration become so great that it's hard to remain objective. Not only have they not resisted the tremendous attacks against the membership, they have led the assault. From Solidarity House to the local hall, the UAW has become an organ of social-fascism, telling the bosses how to carry out their attacks, and totally squashing any rank-and-file resistance. Words cannot describe how bad these bastards are. When our day comes, no punishment will be too great for them.

In a word, the union feels that its duty is to save capitalism. The gross example of the Chrysler "contract" is only a small sample of their dirty deeds, but it is certainly a harbinger of things to come. On a day-to-day basis on the shop floor, as has been frequently described in **Challenge-Desafio**, it is exactly as if there were no union at all. Workers are mercilessly run ragged, from job to job, doing the work of two and three, being forced to work through breaks ("whistle to whistle"), and facing unbelievable harassment. Firings are a daily occurrence for the smallest infraction. There is a particularly racist character to all this as black, Latin, Arab, and women workers face the brunt of these attacks; which have greatly increased against white workers as well. Older workers are being forced back into production jobs, and are being worked to death, because of the crumbling economy and fear of not being able to live on retirement (the average auto worker dies within two years of retirement anyway). We recently ran an article in **Challenge** from Chrysler's Lynch Rd. Assembly which told of a worker with

Dodge ARIES K
Dodge Aries-K is the first automobile to deliver both 6-passenger room and gas mileage ratings of 25 EPA est. mpg / 41 est. Hwy.* A combination that no other car can match. How did Chrysler do it? With advanced front-wheel-drive technology. Solidly based on over 11 billion estimated miles of owner experience with Chrysler Corporation's highly successful small cars, including Dodge Omni, Dodge 024 and Colt. More small-car front-wheel-drive experience in America than Datsun, Toyota, GM or Ford. With all that experience, Chrysler engineers designed Aries-K as a total system—a Direct Power System of front-wheel-drive that puts the weight of the engine and transaxle directly over the front driving wheels. This gives you excellent traction in rain and snow. The car is pulled through turns, rather than pushed. So you get sure control and maneuverability. And with the engine, transaxle and entire power-train in front of the passenger compartment, Aries-K offers mid-size room—6-passenger room—in a neat, efficient package. The heart of Aries' Direct Power System is a remarkable new engine, designed especially for front-wheel-drive, the new Chrysler 2.2 liter Trans-4.
Front-Wheel-Drive
High mileage. And room for 6. There are other cars on the road today that have mileage ratings as high as Aries-K. But none of them have the 6-passenger room Aries-K delivers. The reason: Chrysler front-wheel-drive.
Keeping the drive-train completely forward of the passenger compartment has a number of benefits. Without a huge transmission hump, Aries-K has plenty of front leg-room. And without the clumsy drive-shaft hump that runs the length of rear-drive cars, middle seat passengers in Aries-K don't have to sit with their knees tucked up under their chins.
Because the drive-train is out of the way, the entire passenger compartment is designed for lots of head room, shoulder room and hip room. And without a transmission, drive shaft and rear-axle differential churning away underneath, you'll enjoy a smooth, quiet ride.
In recent years, Americans have turned to small cars from Japan and Germany for the fuel-efficiency they needed.
But they often had to sacrifice the room, ride and comfort they wanted. Now with Aries-K pulling for you, America's not going to be pushed around anymore.
25 /41 EPA EST. MPG EST. HWY.*
6-passengers
America's only 6-pass enger car rated 25 41. EPA EST. MPG EST. HWY.*
The Aries-K Direct Power System: All the driving machinery is combined in a single unit up front; power flows directly from engine to drive wheels. Aries-K makes efficient use of energy. It changes the round-about way rear-wheel drive cars have converted energy. And sheds extra weight that can cut into mileage.
The power of the Trans-4 engine goes directly from the crankshaft to a single unit that combines transmission and front axle. This transaxle turns the front wheels of the car. That's all there is to it.
Rear-drive cars transmit engine power thru drive shaft & rear-axle differential.
In Dodge Aries-K Trans-4 engine power flows directly to the front drive wheels.
Trans-4: the engine with an electronic control computer.
The Trans-4 is an engine with an electronic control computer, a sophisticated feed-back system.
Chrysler's exclusive Electronic Fuel Control System includes electronic ignition, electronic control of spark timing and an electronic feedback carburetor.
Seven sensors located throughout the engine monitor functions and feed data to an on-board computer which continuously adjusts the timing and air/fuel mixture for efficient performance.
"Service-Engineered" Aries-K. Simple to service. Designed inexpensive to maintain. Look under the hood of Aries-K. Many components requiring scheduled maintenance are right up front. Spark plugs, distributor, oil filter and dipstick and transaxle fluid dipstick have been placed in easy-to-reach locations. The Trans-4 engine was designed for Aries-K. And a Serviceability Committee was part of the design team. Easy servicing is built right into Aries-K.
In some other front-wheel-drive cars, so-called "transverse" engines are actually old front-to-back designs. They've just been turned sideways. And this can make components hard to get at, requiring extra time, effort and cost to service.
Aries-K performs automatically many service functions other cars still require. The clutch linkage is self-adjusting, so are the hydraulic lifters. And scheduled maintenance intervals have been extended. The oil filter should be changed every 15,000 miles, the air cleaner every 52,500 miles.
AMERICA'S NOT GOING TO BE PUSHED AROUND ANYMORE.

As imports cut deeper and deeper into their sales, U.S. automakers turn more and more to nationalism and anti-foreign hysteria to sell cars. Chrysler ad above is a good example, with its flag-like K and tough-talk slogan.

40 years seniority coming into work one morning, punching his time card and dropping dead right on the time clock. Deaths and injuries are on the upswing; health and safety have become things of the past.

A GM worker describes how "it used to be that if you told the foreman that you wanted your committeeman, and really insisted, he'd try to resolve the problem with you. Now, he'll tell you to do something you know is wrong, and in the same breath ask you "Do you want your committeeman?" The list is endless. If there is a depression in the industry, then there is also fascism in the industry within the union itself.

BUILD THE PARTY'S STRENGTH IN AUTO

The tremendous frustration, due mostly to our small numbers and our own subjective weaknesses, is tempered by the understanding that when the ruling class turns to fascism, they are at their weakest. Moreover, the response of the workers to our line has been tremendously encouraging. In preparation for May Day, hundreds upon hundreds of **Challenge-Desafio** were sold at the plants and unemployment offices (where you meet the most auto workers in Detroit) almost 1,000 May Day pamphlets were sold, the overwhelming majority (75-80%) to workers. The same ratio holds true for the few hundred signatures collected on the InCAR "WE WON'T FIGHT A RACIST WAR" petition. Far and away, however, the most encouragement comes from the small circle of auto workers now drawing closer to the Party.

In a certain sense, the main battle we face in the UAW is the ideological struggle between revisionism and Marxism-Leninism. The UAW leadership is a pack of scoundrels who got their training in various revisionist and social-democratic circles. The loyal opposition within the union comes from a varied array of revisionists, Trotskyites, and Maoites. They all get excited about their little tactical differences about how to lead the workers to the overseas but I still consider the scene last summer in front of Dodge Main, at a UAW-called rally, where a trailer held a union marching band playing "Solidarity Forever" and as it moved down the street it was followed by 200 revisionists while the workers stood and watched the spectacle. The phonies are all united against the Party, especially on three major points: 1) fighting racism, 2) attacking social fascism, and 3) fighting for Socialism. All of this is to our advantage. We've got them where we want them, ideologically.

Fraser's big offensive has been to try and win masses of auto workers and the whole working class, to "Buy American" and "fight the imports." He has grabbed big headlines by going to Tokyo to demand investment in the U.S. (while promising Japanese bosses he would give them bargain rates on workers' wages, just as Woodcock did with VW), and by spending a lot of time in Washington whining about Carter, and campaigning for Kennedy. He has tried to point auto workers every way but at the bosses, demanding Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) money for "workers hurt by import related layoffs" and trade restrictions against the Japanese, all in the name of "auto workers."

As U.S. imperialism continues its plunge with increasing speed and the auto crisis deepens, intensifying all the contradictions in the industry and the union, the UAW becomes more and more a part of the fascist state apparatus. To even continue to call it a union is rapidly becoming a misnomer. Their commitment to the bosses' state, and their active role in it, is not new, but, as the system collapses, it is taking on new dimensions and new meaning. This is not a development unique to the U.S. In this present period of world crisis, it is being repeated in Japan, Europe, and throughout the world. Ichiro Shioji, head of the Japan Auto Workers union says that he owes his world view to Leonard Woodcock, whom he first heard speak at Harvard in 1960, while Shioji was spending four months at Harvard under the auspices of the U.S. State Department. Woodcock, a social-democrat himself, is now Ambassador to China trying to keep the war alliance intact while instructing the new Chinese bosses how to squeeze the most out of China's workers. Fraser has joined the Chrysler board. Not to be outdone by revisionists, hard-line anti-communist Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO, is a member of Rockefeller's Tri-Lateral Commission.

The point of all this, is that the building of the Party and InCAR in the industry is everything. As we stated sometime ago, during another discussion on auto, we must proceed as if there were no union at all. This is much truer now than it was then, and among other things, means we must become more skillful in a mass way, much more determined and consistent in our basebuilding, and more conscious about questions of security for the Party and its base in auto.

The other point I would make, is that along with more of an openness to our line, there is also an increase in the workers' reservations about getting active with us. Various fears, demoralization, cynicism, etc. This in no way should be interpreted to mean that workers are turning to the right. The UAW's picket lines against imports have been small and pitiful, made up mostly of paid organizers. I am just trying to make the point that the opportunities are greater now than they've ever been, but it takes a lot more work to realize those opportunities. Like the "War Footing" report said, you have to run to stand still and you have to run harder to make an advance.

DETROIT: THE WOUNDED CITY

Some special attention must be paid to the particular effects the auto crisis and the decline of U.S. imperialism is having in the city of Detroit, a city whose workers have a proud history of multi-racial, anti-racist, violent class struggle.

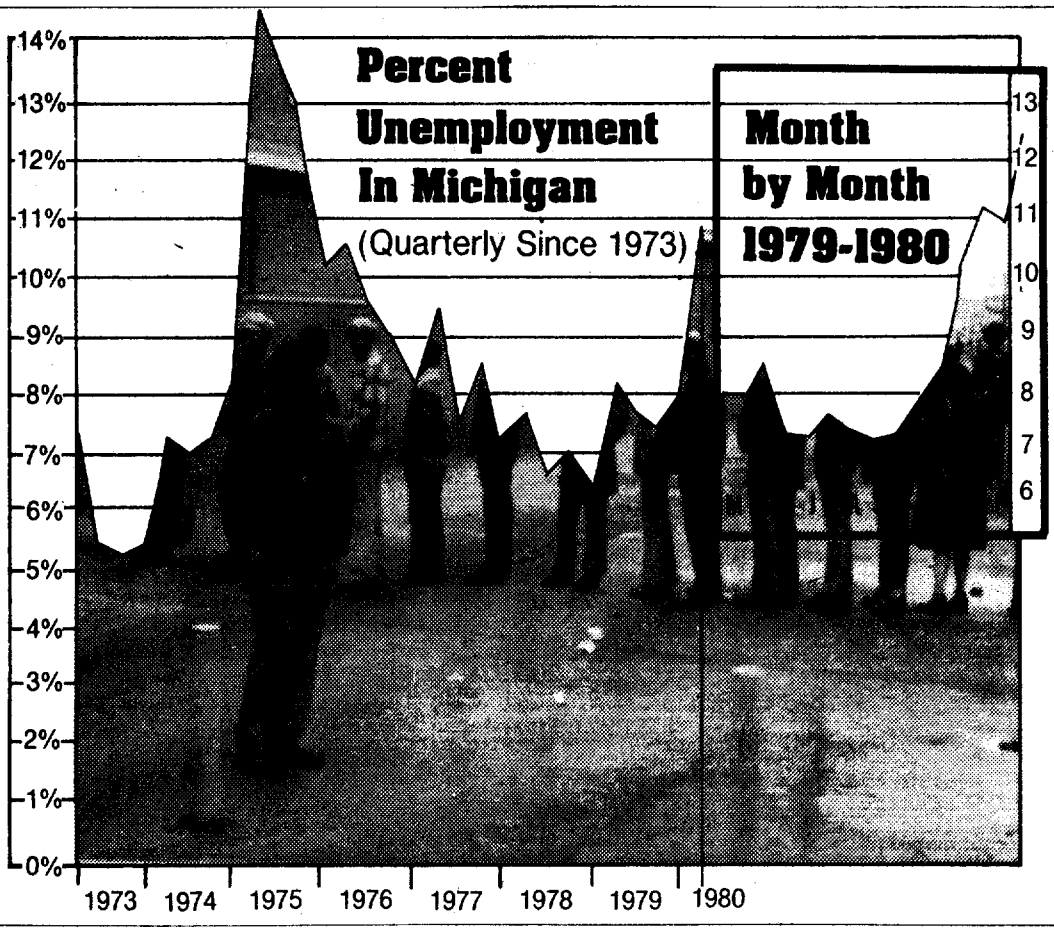
A year ago, there were 366,000 people out of work in Michigan. Today there are 523,000. A year ago, the average production worker's wage was $375 a week, worth $177 in 1967 dollars. Today it is still $375/week, but it is worth $154 in '67 dollars. In 1979 auto production for the state was over 8 million. In 1980 it will be under 7 million. Truck and bus production have been cut in half. Almost one out of three auto workers who had jobs last summer are now on indefinite layoff. A year ago Michigan issued 54,000 building permits. This year it will be under 20,000.

The point of all this is that the building of the Party and InCAR in the industry is everything.

Unemployment for non-white workers in Southeastern Michigan for the first quarter of 1980 is at 25%. The youth unemployment rate is at 20% for the area, and 40% for non-white youth. The unemployment rate for minority youth in the city will be over 60% this summer.

Applications for public assistance were up 61% this January over last year. There are over 300,000 people on either ADC or GA this year, and the state will have to come up with another $145 million to keep the welfare system running for the rest of the year at its current level. In March, state collection of sales and use taxes were down over 50% from last year. The state will lay off almost 1,700 workers, close parks and various state institutions, and launch a fascist welfare crack down to try and cope. They are hoping against hope that their $275 million "rainy day" fund will get them through the summer. In Detroit itself, things are worse.

Detroit has a population of about 1.3 million.



The city is over 60% black and one out of every three jobs is auto-related (the national average is one out of seven). Right now Mayor "Coldblood" Young and the Detroit ruling class are feeling the heat and are attacking the workers with a vengeance.

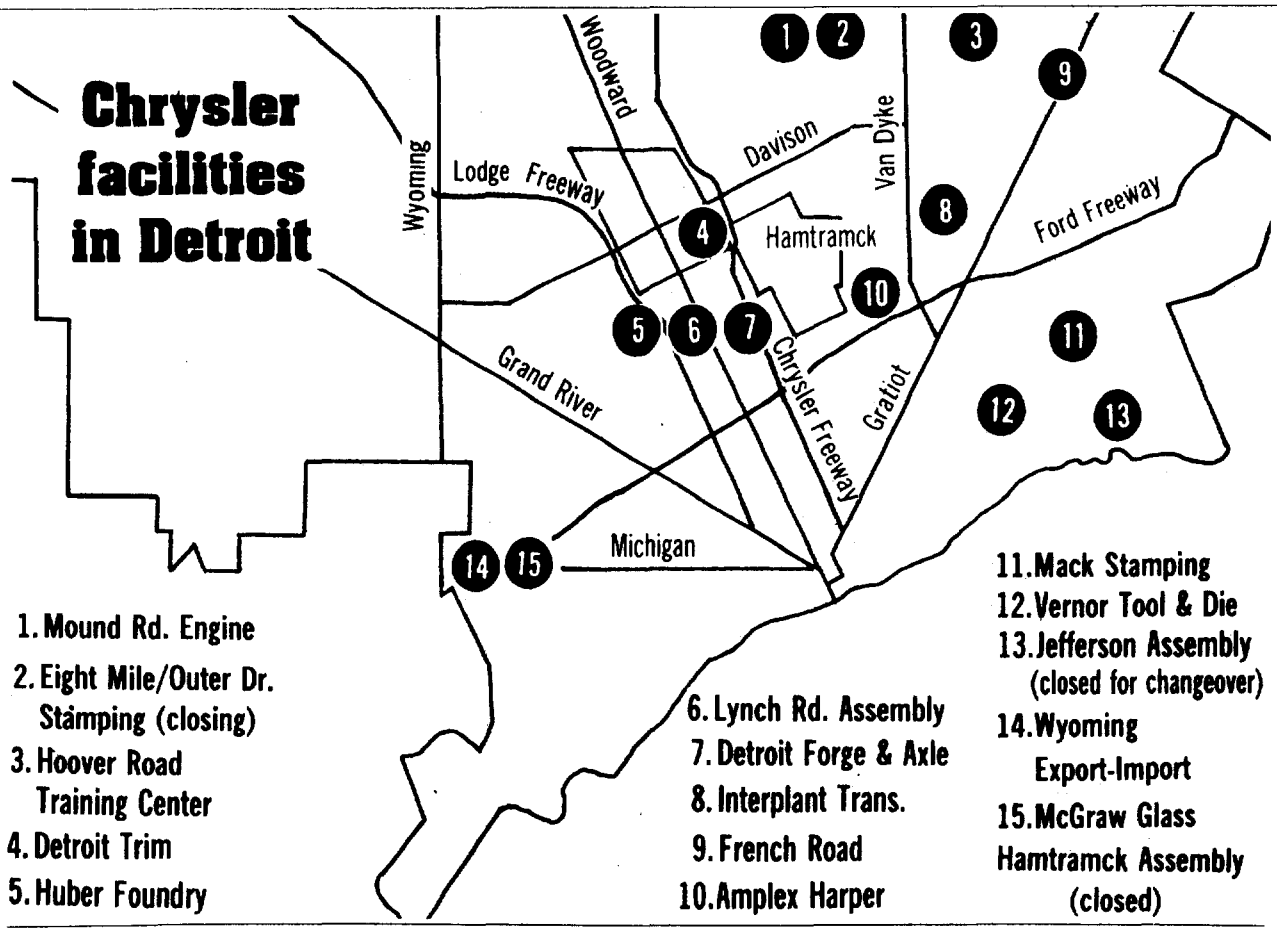
- The city has just unloaded Detroit General Hospital
- Big cuts in sanitation, EMS, and all city services. The fire department will be at its lowest level since 1925!
- Unemployment is officially approaching 16% —over 100,000 workers.
- 270,000 Detroiters are either on ADC or GA. 293,000 are receiving food stamps.
- One out of every three people are on some form of government program.

In addition to these figures, earnings dropped at almost all major banks for the last quarter of 1979. For the first quarter of 1980, the National Bank of Detroit's parent company showed a 8% drop in profits, and the Northern States Ban-corp, holding company for the City National Bank of Detroit lost $1.1 million, their second consecutive losing quarter. Last year, with all the hoopla about Renaissance City, less than 10 building permits were issued for single family homes. The bosses are being forced to layoff 700 of their cattle-prodding cops, one of the few bright spots for the workers. On top of this, all the bosses' tax revenues will be way down, meaning the cuts will be even steeper.

Chrysler and GM are Detroit's two largest employers, with more than twice as many workers combined than the next 10 largest employers put together. The two auto bosses are the city's second and third largest tax payers after Detroit Edison. The crisis in auto is devastating Detroit. Lear Siegler, a GM parts supplier is permanently closing its auto division plant. Federal-Hewitt, which makes automotive solder and bearings, is cutting back its Hamtramck and Detroit workforce by 15%. McLouth Steel just laid off 800 workers, bring their total to 1,500. Great Lakes Steel, a part of National Steel, just laid off 900 workers.

With so much of Detroit resting on the fortunes of Chrysler, things are likely to get even worse. Already, much damage has been done. Two years ago Chrysler employed 81,700 workers in the Detroit area. Now that is down to just over 47,000 (including those laid off). Chrysler has closed Dodge Main, is closing Eight Mile Stamping, and might also permanently close Lynch Rd. Assembly. Chrysler built its fortunes in Detroit, and now as it goes down, it is taking Detroit with it.

Chrysler has 21 plants and factories in the Detroit area, 15 of them in the city. Until the total collapse, they had a payroll of $1.5 billion annually with another $37 million in Ann Arbor. It is estimated that over 200,000 men, women, and children were directly relying on Chrysler paychecks.



Nine percent of the city's production jobs are with Chrysler, and another 51,000 workers in supplier companies are totally reliant on Chrysler business. 5,500 companies did $1.9 billion a year business with Chrysler, from print shops to trucking firms. One-third of Chrysler's U.S. blue collar workers and 10% of the white collar workers are black, 50% of them in Detroit. Chrysler's payroll to black workers was $800 million a year, or 1% of the total U.S. "black economy."

There are a number of possibilities for Chrysler in Detroit. If Lynch Rd. stays down, Mack Stamping and Detroit Forge and Axle, which feed Lynch Rd. are also going to be affected. Either Huber or Winfield foundry will likely close as Chrysler moves to lighter aluminum castings. Warren Truck will be closed unless Chrysler decides to retool it for the light trucks and vans it hopes to sell by '82 or '83, if they live that long. Mound Rd. Engine will probably be sacked, like Windsor Engine was, as Chrysler will be buying their V-6 engines from other companies while making all their 4-cylinder engines at Trenton Engine. Detroit Forge and Axle and Detroit Universal are in the same boat, as they make parts for rear-wheel drive vehicles, which Chrysler is dumping completely by '83. Chrysler is now buying the front-wheel drive components from other companies, and will continue to do so. And that's the rosy estimate. If Chrysler goes bankrupt, the Department of Transportation estimates that there would be an immediate and long-lasting loss of 200,000 jobs. In the face of all this and more, the racist ruling class is giving Detroit's workers the Republican Convention and the '82 Superbowl.

The Party's estimate of a year ago on the effects of the current economic crisis and its effect on Detroit and the working class were right on the money. There is every reason to believe that the mighty working class of Detroit will rise up and strike a blow against the ruling class. The prospects are very exciting and the opportunities great to advance the fight for Socialism among, literally, hundreds of thousands of workers. The key element in all of this is taking the responsibility of being a communist organizer, a Party organizer, all the more seriously and building our lives around the workers—**two-thirds base building/one-third mass agitation.**

A major aspect of expanding our base must be to broaden out InCAR, building a mass presence at the plants and unemployment offices around racist unemployment, no jobs for bosses' war, 30 for 40, and international solidarity. The main focus should be bringing many auto workers to N.Y. in August. Additionally, the Party should view the summer as the time to fight for a rapid and permanent jump in the circulation of **Challenge-Desafio** in Detroit. Relying on the workers we know to carry out some of this work, I believe we will have an auto club in Detroit by the InCAR Convention. PL

This article has also been published as a Progressive Labor Party pamphlet, and will soon appear in Spanish also. To order additional copies, at 25c each, use the subscription and literature coupon on page 72.

Garment Workers Unite!

Smash Sexism with Socialist Revolution

In the U.S. today the position of all workers, and especially women workers, is worsening daily. To see why this is happening and what we can do about it, we have to look at the general situation in which we find ourselves. Basically, the capitalist system in the U.S. and worldwide is now in a period of severe economic crisis, caused by the bosses' greed for profits. As always under capitalism, the bosses take out their economic problems on the backs of the workers, particularly minority workers, and within that, most sharply of all on minority women workers.

The bosses are preparing to resolve their economic crisis by a new imperialist war—mainly between the U.S. and Russia—to see which of these super-imperialist powers will control the world. In *their* war, they will try to force millions of workers— us and our children—to fight for their dying system. To do this, they are developing fascism which is an even more openly terroristic, brutal and violent attack on the workingclass. The Progressive Labor Party (PLP) strategy is to unite men and women workers of all races and national backgrounds to fight this fascism and to turn the bosses' imperialist war into a revolution for socialism! **Socialism is the only alternative to capitalism and to its devastating sexism, racism, fascism and wars.**

PLP feels it is crucial to **fight and defeat sexism** within the ranks of the workingclass because only the unity of men and women workers of all races and nationalities can defeat the bosses and **win** a decent future for our class, and our families. PLP is a revolutionary communist party. This article uses the historical experiences of the workingclass and communist movement to map out a strategy and program on how to fight sexism and to eliminate it with socialist revolution.

Today, as always, women are taking a leading role in fighting the oppression of capitalism. This fight includes struggles against the racism, sexism and nationalism the bosses use to attack and weaken all of us.

We begin this article with some brief stories by several garment workers, members of PLP and anti-racists in the International Committee Against Racism (InCAR), who cite their experiences on the way to fight sexist ideology among workers. No doubt, readers can give other examples from their own experiences.

WILL WOMEN FIGHT BACK? WILL MEN EVER CHANGE?

by Maria N.

Male chauvinism and feminism are widespread in the garment industry. One example is in a factory in which there are about 800 workers. In the department in which I worked there were about 100 workers, 80% of whom were women. I was in the factory trying to win my friends to the struggle for an anti-racist union and the fight for socialism. The biggest problem I encountered was with the men. They argued that the women would *never* rebel. They repeated this every day. I argued with them, trying to get them to see that it was the bosses who pushed this destructive idea and who always underestimate the capability of all workers in general, and women especially.

Because I spent some time talking to the men, the women didn't have much confidence in me, because they thought it was wrong that a married woman made friends with men. But then I began struggling with the women also. Really, this problem of sexism impeded our struggle with our real enemies, the bosses who exploit us all.

Things began to change in the factory. There began to be more contact and trust between the men and the women workers. It started because I organized collective lunches. Everyone would bring different food and there we talked about our families and about the struggle. This is how more confidence developed between the men and the women. Even with the little time I dedicated to this struggle I was able to win something. With more consistent struggle, we can build a multiracial movement, unified with men and women, with women and men in the leadership.

This problem doesn't only exist in the factories. We also meet it when we visit workers in their homes. Male chauvinism exists in men and women in the form of jealousy. We must confront this problem. We can develop political struggle and at the same time we can deepen our friendship with our fellow workers. We must integrate our lives and our families with those of our friends, discussing our common problems and teaching and learning how to better struggle against the cause of our problems—the bosses' capitalist system. We must unite to build the anti-racist garment workers' union and a socialist revolution, through which we will be able to defeat the bosses' sexism once and for all!

SOCIALISM: THE ONLY CURE FOR CHAUVINISM

by Andrea C.

Male chauvinism is a sickness of the capitalist system that affects us all at different stages of our lives and affects society as a whole. This sickness can best be seen in the shops or workplaces and in the home. I am a woman member of PLP who works in Garment and I have seen male chauvinism from workers, even those with some degree of political consciousness. One example I remember was a couple we used to see socially and talk politics with. They were both very advanced politically, but once, on the occasion of a party, the husband got very jealous because his wife was very friendly to our comrades, both men and women. After this the woman stopped participating with us, and she was a great loss to us.

Male chauvinism is a sickness that affects both men and women. It is a weapon the bosses use...

It is a hard struggle, even in our own minds. Both on the job and at home, chauvinist problems are constantly popping up, though they are resolved a little more easily when both the husband and the wife are dedicated to the struggle for workers' power. We believe that chauvinism can only be eliminated by a socialist society in which we maintain constant struggle with ourselves and with our fellow-workers on this issue. In the new society we will create—socialism—the children will be able to learn from good ideas and good examples. This could only happen under socialism. That's why we have to fight to smash all the bosses' weapons that only sicken and divide the working class.

My example above doesn't mean that only men suffer from this sickness. Women are also stricken with it. I could give a number of examples. But the important thing is to fight against this evil whenever we find it and never to support these ideas. Chauvinism really means that one group of workers doesn't believe in the ability of another group. Socialism will prove the chauvinists wrong.

DEFEAT SEXISM BY STRUGGLE AND BASEBUILDING

by Dolores Q.

In the garment industry, one of the lowest paying in the U.S., 80% of the workers are women. But one of the biggest problems in building our revoltionary and anti-racist movement in the industry is the sexist ideology among workers that women can't participate in the struggle and that they don't have the capacity to understand it. The opposite is true. Our experience shows us women *leading* struggle, including strikes, and women communists who have maintained a consistent struggle against the bosses' sexism.

One contradiction that exists is that many men debate and discuss our political ideas and program with us women activists but, although they know we're right, they hold back because a woman is struggling with them. In one shop a woman spent two years fighting to build the InCAR union, fighting the boss; she had to fight male chauvinism the whole time because the male workers said she would never organize anything, and they spent their time telling male chauvinist jokes. This only caused constant fights between the men and the women. Also, many women refused to participate in political discussions because they feared that their husbands would get angry.

But the time came in this shop when the boss deliberately reduced the work available in order to reduce the piece rate and to lay off a lot of workers. Then the workers realized that, in practice, it was necessary to organize. Proof that chauvinism could be defeated was the fact that a male worker (a friend of InCAR) and a female worker (member of PLP) gave leadership to the strike against the boss' plan. It became clear thatr men and women workers could unite and participate in the struggle together, because male chauvinism only benefits the bosses and divides men and women workers.

Another experience we had was with a male garment worker, a member of InCAR, who was organizing the Anti-Racist Garment Workers' Union (ARGWU). The way he managed to organize the union in his factory was by winning the women to become organizers and circulate the union cards. But the problem that he had was that his women co-workers trusted him but their husbands were jealous and mistrusted him. The only way he could win the husbands to support their wives in struggle was to spend a lot of time with the husbands and wives socially, so they could see this comrade also has a wife and kids. He can win these workers to trust him, win them to see the importance of the garment workers' union and the need for their wives to participate in it. I think it is vital to have these relationships because we spend most of our time among the workers and we are one big family. Revolution will be made with the participation of both men and women. We communists believe in loyalty between married people, *and* loyalty to the working class.

WOMEN LEAD MEN WORKERS IN WINNING A RAISE

by Rosa V.

I am a female garment worker, a member of PLP. In garment we are fighting for an anti-racist, muli-racial union. As we know, garment is one of the largest industries where a majority of women workers are super-exploited due to the unquenchable thirst of the bosses for profits. But we must pleasure and not true fighters of the working class. less if we rot away our lives in their factories for a pitiful salary that is barely enough to survive.

In the factory where I worked for over two years the boss once had us for twenty-two days with no work. As soon as we showed up for work the boss would send us home. Then, one Thursday, there was a lot of work suddenly, but the work was very difficult and the piece rate was very low. We were being paid 45 cents per piece when previously it was 75 cents. Then a male worker stood up and helped me talk with the other workers. We then all decided to go speak with the boss.

The boss said to take him an example of the work to see what he could do. We did so and he said that the price was OK as it was. We all got very mad. We went to see him again and told him that if he didn't pay us what we demanded we were not going to work. When the boss saw this he shook from fear and said: "Everyone must leave! I am very afraid with all of you present here together!" And so I explained to my fellow workers this was why we needed to fight for a multiracial, anti-racist garment union. The best thing was that after all, we all *won* a better price, and I won confidence in my co-workers because another woman worker told me "You were right! United we will win!"

One of the reasons these bosses give for paying lousy wages is that "women should earn less because they have less ability," and in this way they build and profit from chauvinism. Male chauvinism is a sickness that affects both men and women. It is a weapon that bosses use to divide workers and make women seem objects of pleasure and not true fighters of the working class. Because the bosses know we can stand shoulder to shoulder with our working-class brothers. This is exactly what happened in our small strike, where the majority of women workers stopped working, and afterwards, the male workers followed our lead. This shows that both women and men are strong and that we are not afraid of the bosses.

Another sexist idea is that "men are more political." This is based on appearance rather than reality. This idea must be rejected for workers to achieve anything in the garment industry, or any industry.

Working women have tremendous hatred for the bosses and a desire to fight for themselves and their families, and great stability and ability to organize. In garment, the vast majority of women remain stuck in low-paying jobs for many years. Women suffer the worst exploitation and are a tremendous source of strength and leadership to the workers' movement in garment and all over. Workers have to break with the reactionary, male chauvinist illusion that only those who are like the bosses and who are not "bogged down" with family responsibilities are the ones who can lead us to victory. Garment workers and all workers need the leadership and participation of the most exploited section of the workers, minority women workers, in order to win power to the working class.

When PLP and our allies in InCAR have a mass base among workers, communist principles of working class unity and struggle for working class state power will become, as Marx said, a "material force." Then the working class can make real revolutionary changes!

SEXISM IN PRACTICE: WORKING CONDITIONS IN GARMENT

Conditions for the 1,250,000 garment workers in the U.S. 83% of whom are minority women, are not much better than in the sweatshops of 1900. The garment bosses have always used racism, sexism and anti-communism against the workers to keep them at the bottom of the pay scale and working conditions; as U.S. imperialism declines against its competitors, they are stepping up this super-exploitation more and more. The industry in Los Angeles provides an example. The more than 100,000 garment workers in California are 80% Latin immigrants who are continually threatened with deportation. In Los Angeles they make $60 to $100 a week for a full-time job working at piece-rates. $60 a week comes to $1.50 an hour, so most of the workers do not earn the minimum wage. They work in the oldest factory buildings in the city, in clouds of lint, without air conditioning; on hot days many faint. Hundreds of workers share filthy toilets. No lounges or lunchrooms exist. When workers are injured they are not given medical treatment. There is no real union: no sick pay, no maternity leave, no vacation pay, no retirement. Though most of the workers are mothers, no day-care is provided. Whenever work is low, the bosses lay everyone off, or call in the MIGRA (Federal immigration agents) to raid the factory with no guarantee of being hired back.

An investigation of the industry by the California Department of Industrial Relations, which itself is certainly no friend to the worker, in 1976 found widespread violation of the minimum wage law, failure to keep accurate records of piece work performed (resulting in nonpayment of earned wages), and no workman's compensation insurance. Working conditions, such as meals and rest

A typical apartment sweatshop of the early 1900s and a satirical poster. Sexism and racism are among the tools that have enabled the bosses to maintain conditions like these today in Los Angeles and New York.

periods, were below standard. They found widespread violation of the law prohibiting home work. Apartment sweatshops employ thousands of workers in Los Angeles, under conditions even worse than in the factories. Sometimes these are fly-by-night operations which end up paying no wages at all.

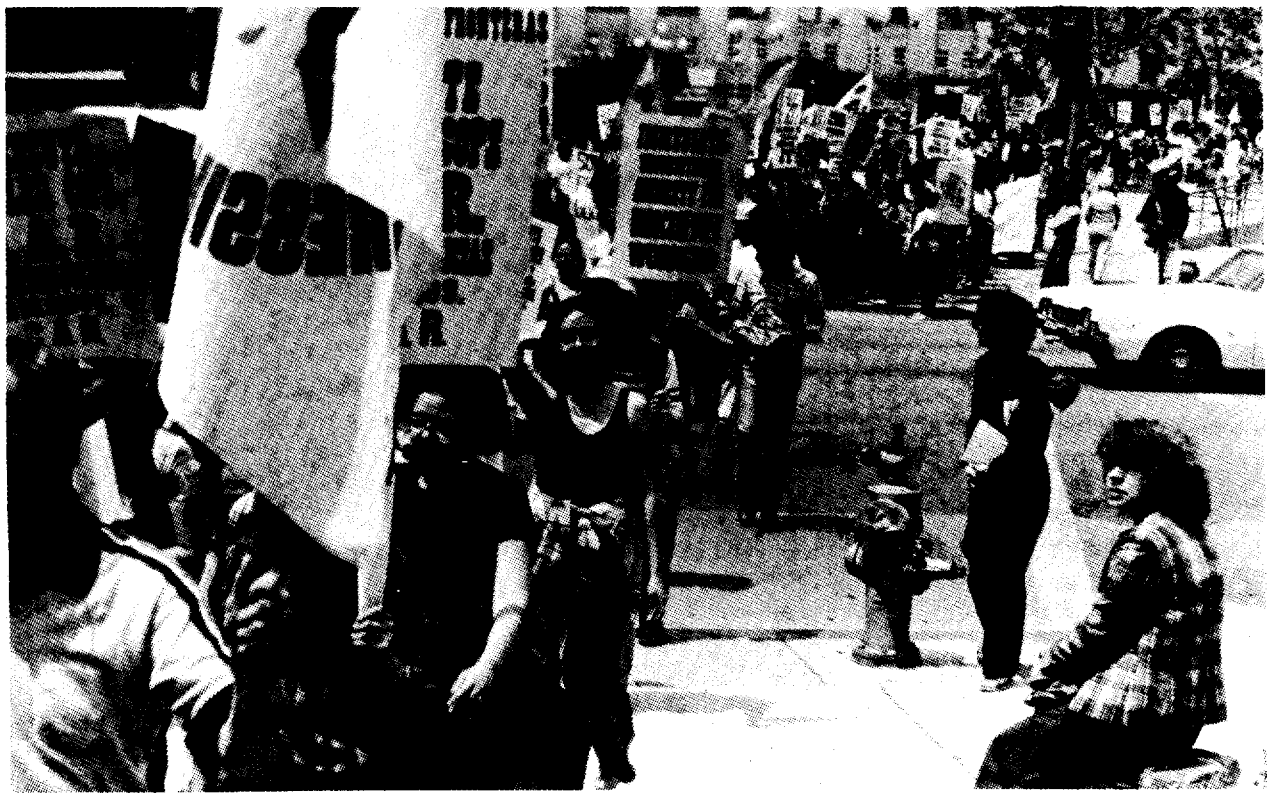
All this means super-profits, and the California garment industry has grown since 1965 to take advantage of these undocumented women workers. Sales have tripled from $800 million to $2.2 billion, and employment has nearly doubled from 65,000 to over 100,000 workers. The sexism of the industry is not only a matter of the super-exploitation of mostly female workers: it is deliberately organized along sexist lines. The few skilled jobs, paying a little more, are restricted to men. Cutters, for example, are only 2% of the workers, but they make almost twice the wage of the average worker, and they are all male. Clothes designers are white males, cutters black and Latin males. Racism and sexism are thus basic principles of the internal organization of the industry.

But while a few men have more than the rest of the men and all the women workers, and more men are unionized, the result of the bosses' organization of this industry is that ALL garment workers are low-paid, super-exploited! The average unionized worker in the U.S. makes $9 an hour, while the average unionized garment worker makes $3.60. So the racism and sexism in garment result in the male and white workers being super-exploited also. **Sexism is a bosses' weapon against all workers, bringing down their wages and hampering their ability to fight back—in every industry, everywhere.**

RACISM AND IMPERIALISM: TOOLS OF THE GARMENT BOSSES

The conditions for garment workers in the U.S. could not exist without the cheap-labor system created by U.S. immigration laws. Millions of workers in the U.S. are defined by the state as "illegal" and therefore have no means of redress against illegal work conditions: for the undocumented worker, all things are legal, goes the bosses' racist logic. The union leadership goes along with this and refuses to organize undocumented workers or to fight for unconditional amnesty for undocumented immigrants.

The main reason the garment bosses are able to get away with the appalling conditions and slave wages they impose on the mostly women workers is that the State, the law, guarantees them a constant supply or turnover of workers who face tremendous obstacles in fighting back. If workers rebel, the boss just calls in Immigration to deport them. Whenever they want to close the shop for a while, they call in the "Migra" again to deport the workers. No severance pay, no unemployment compensation, and no strikes: a great system for the bosses, underwritten by the federal government in violation of its other laws.



Immigration laws and immigration raids are used to intimidate undocumented workers and to spread the lie that "aliens steal jobs." Our Party fights for unconditional amnesty for all undocumented workers and unity of all workers.

This is why the International Committee against Racism (InCAR) and PLP have always made the main slogan of their unionizing drive on the LA. garment center "**Immediate, unconditional amnesty for all undocumented workers.**" Racism against immigrants, national chauvinism as official state policy, is the legal and economic basis of this sexist industry. The garment bosses and their state have woven together the twin evils of racism and sexism to boost profits, and PLP maintains that we must link the anti-sexist struggle of the garment worker to the struggle against racism, as InCAR is doing in its campaigns.

The immigrant workers are here in the first place because of the horrendous fascist conditions caused by U.S. imperialism in Latin America, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. In Guatemala, for example, 70% of the people make less than $42 a year! Unemployment there ranges up to 50%; 54% of the women workers in Guatemala City are domestic servants. These conditions in the countries subjected to U.S. imperialism have caused the U.S. garment bosses to run all round the world starting up "runaway shops." **Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore: wherever the workers are worst off and most exploited, that's where you find the garment industry, making super-profits from masses of women workers.**

The U.S. immigration laws provide them with similar conditions here in the U.S., as far as possible. When the racist leaders of the garment unions spend workers' dues money on "Made in U.S.A." advertising Campaigns, and rant about stopping imports, they really mean "Made by Super-Exploited Immigrant Labor" and they never oppose the import of low-wage labor! Workers under the imperialist system have the same interests no matter what their country: the massive immigrations of workers from the less industrially developed countries to the more developed (from Turkey to West Germany, from Jamaica to Great Britain, from Senegal to France, from Mexico to the U.S., or, as offered by the Castro government, from Cuba to the U.S.S.R. timberlands) are part of the unequal division of labor imperialism imposes on the world, in which the mostly non-white workers of the less developed countries bear a heavier racist burden. More and more, the bosses are forced to import the worst conditions of their neo-colonies into their home countries.

The garment industry and the women who work in it around the world are an example of this racist, sexist principle of the imperialist system. **Racism and sexism must be fought hand-in-hand together!**

Besides the manipulation of immigration laws, another "external" cause of the sexism in the industry is the supportive framework of legal sexism throughout U.S. industry generally. Garment is the worst example of the general rule, that

women are channelled into the worst-paying, least stable jobs. Women make on the average $8,618 a year for full-time work, only 58% of what men make. Women are faring worse now, relative to men, than twenty years ago. Of the female workforce, 35% are in clerical, 21% in service (such as cafeteria and domestic), with only 15% in blue-collar and only 10% in professional jobs.

The boss' argument that this is because women are physically weaker and less skilled than men is shown up as a lie even by their own practice, in wartime; during the first two world wars they dropped that pretense and placed millions of women in heavy manufacturing, the number of women workers increasing 140% during World War Two. The recruiting of women (who are scoring higher on U.S. army tests in such things as marksmanship) and the proposed drafting of women into the armed forces also exposes the boss' main sexist argument for unequal job restrictions and low wages for women as a lie. **The truth is that the oppression of women has no basis in anything but profit.**

Women are singled out for oppression through job restrictions and low pay scales because it is profitable.

The systematic organization of industry along sexist dividing lines of job category and pay scale—the system that is so profitable to the garment bosses—is a feature of the capitalist economy as such. (And the state capitalism of the U.S.S.R. is no exception in this regard.) It produces not only higher profit margins for the bosses, not only terrible conditions for the female half of the work-force, but a lower-paid, politically weaker working class as a whole. That is the real meaning of sexism as a weapon of the capitalist class, not just a traditional male supremacy inherited from ages past.

The same point is clear if we look at another general aspect of sexism directed at women workers as a group. Women *need* to work: in surveys 90% of women say they work out of necessity, not for extra income. The U.S. government fixes the income required for a family of four to live comfortably at $19,000. This isn't enough to buy a house, and with 20% inflation soon won't be enough to buy shoes! Yet the average full-time male worker makes $14,626 a year. If half the male workers make less than it takes to feed a family, this would account for the presence of almost all the married women in the work force.

The average married woman worker contributes 38% of family income, even at the low wages she receives. What this means is that sexism is used to lengthen the working day for the working class as a whole: more total worker-hours from the family as a unit, for the same subsistence wages that a single family bread-winner used to earn. This reduces the total leisure time of our class, increases stress, piles yet more labor on most married women who because of sexism do more than their share of unpaid domestic labor . . . and the bosses have the gall to claim that women don't need equal pay for equal work because they are working for extra income, are marginal workers!

Women are now an integral part of the U.S. work force, singled out for oppression through job restriction and low pay scales merely because it is profitable. 42% of the U.S. work force is female; most married women do not stay home, but work; among women with school-age children, 53% work; in the U.S. today, a woman can expect to spend 35 years of her life at wage labor. The facts show that sexism has no basis other than profit, that its effects injure in severe and profound ways the whole fabric of working-class life—that sexism is a weapon used against all of us in the working class. This is the social structure that supports the vicious super-exploitation of the woman operator in garment factories.

SEXISM IN PRACTICE: TREASON OF THE GARMENT UNION BOSSES

Sexism is rampant in the U.S. trade union leadership. That is because that leadership is pro-capitalist, and serves the bosses' interests. In garment, the AFL-CIO, the ILGWU and the CWA, have undermined the garment workers' struggles. The sellout union leaders have not won basic benefits and wages achieved by other unionized workers because they have refused to organize the fight of the "unskilled" mostly women workers in the industry. They attack, especially viciously, immigrant workers and foreign workers overseas, with the racist lie that immigrants, especially the undocumented, are to blame for unemployment and low wages among government workers. They refuse to organize them. The leadership of the AFL-CIO is just as racist and sexist as the bosses. As a result, only 10% of the garment workers in California are even in unions!

But this is part of a sexist pattern in the working class as a whole: in the U.S., only 7% of women workers are in unions, compared to 25% of men

From the earliest days of union organizing in garment, women have been among the militants and leaders. These women were celebrating the victory of the 1909 shirtwaist makers' strike in New York.

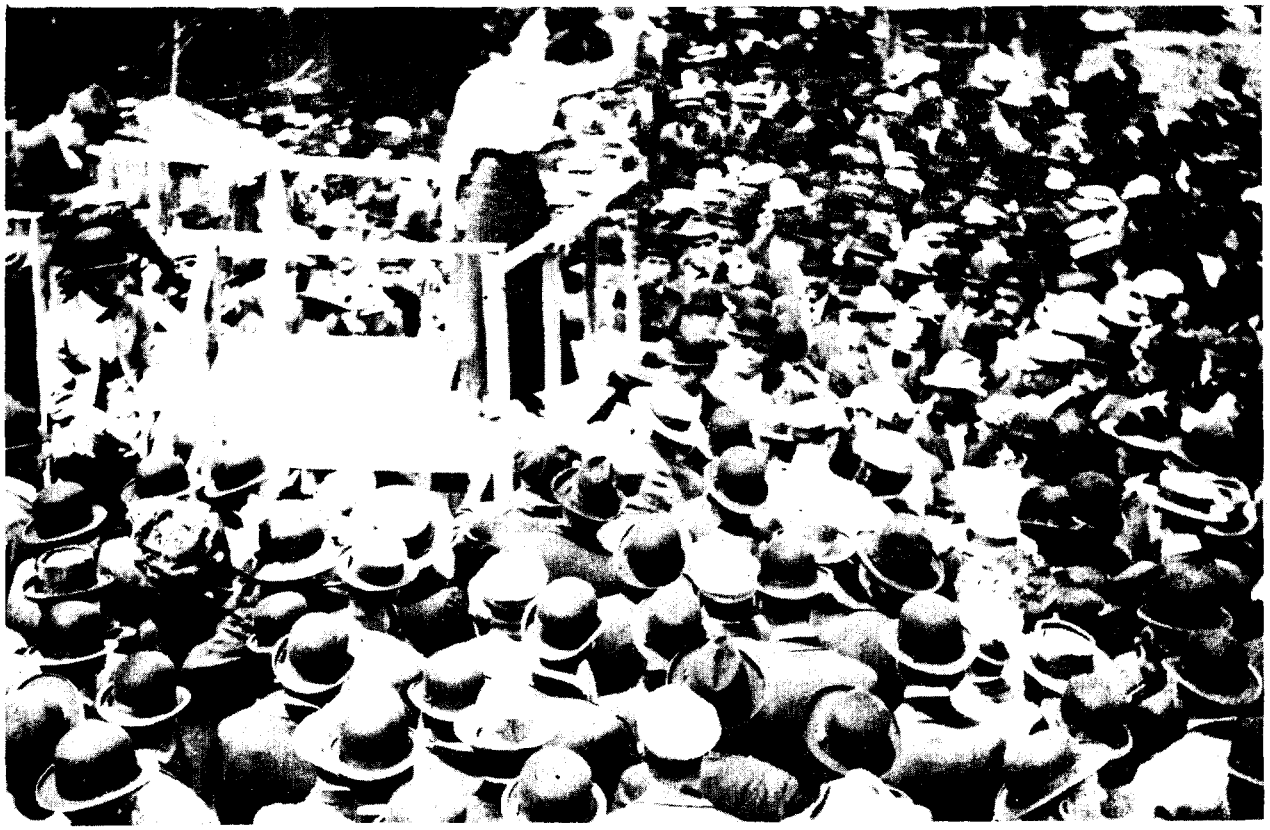
workers—itself a pitifully low figure. The setting for this betrayal of the workers by the pro-capitalist union leaders is the struggle that has always gone on in the labor movement between those who saw unions as a way to hold on to privileges for a small number of skilled craft workers, and the militants (especially communists) who saw that the interests of the workers lay in uniting *all* workers, regardless of race, sex or craft, to challenge the bosses and eventually overthrow them. Only the Left (Communists, revolutionary socialists) organized minority, immigrant and women workers. The Right (The pro-capitalists, liberal reformers) felt that the interests of whites were counter to those of black and Latin workers, and that women belonged in the home, or weren't political enough to participate. This difference in approach still faces garment workers today! The choice is between the Right-wing entrenched leadership of the ILGWU and the Left, forces—the InCAR/PLP-led Anti-Racist Garment Workers Union.

By the 1930s the Left had won much of the leadership of the U.S. union movement in such basic industries as auto, steel, and electrical. Millions joined CIO unions. But the bosses counter-attacked after World War Two with an anti-communist campaign. Because the old communist party did not have a revolutionary mass base to defend the need for communist leadership among the masses of workers, the Left was driven out of all positions of leadership in the unions. The result: a union hierarchy emerged that functions as part of the capitalist class, often as vicious as the police, and holds back workers' struggles. This is why they promote, rather than fight, racism and sexism.

The treason of the right-wing garment union leaders goes back to 1909. In that year 30,000 workers, almost all women, carried out a general strike of the shirtwaist-makers in New York and Philadelphia. They were responding to a decade in which garment manufacturers had tried to stop the workers from organizing a union by firing anyone who joined it. When the thirteen-week-long strike started most of the workers in the industry weren't in the Union. By its end 312 shops had become union-only closed shops.

The main problem for the women strikers was the union leadership itself. Racism was somewhat overcome, with the different nationalities (mostly Russian immigrants, with a few Italians and U.S.-born workers) sticking together fairly well. Sexism was still a big weakness, since many skilled male workers went back to work after only a few days out. The strength of the rank-and-file women would have prevailed, however, if it were not for the union leaders. Against the wishes of the rank-and-file, they allowed the issue of the closed shop (all workers must be union workers), the key demand of the strike, to be arbitrated.

600 workers were arrested on the picket lines while the leadership prepared their sellout. The women then refused it, staging a wildcat to keep



Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, speaking above, was one of the main IWW leaders in the Lawrence, Mass. and Paterson, N.J. textile strikes, and later became an important leader of the Communist Party.

the demand for the closed shop intact. Without union backing and strike benefits, however, they lost a lot of supporters.

While the right-wing garment unions would never have started the general strike by themselves, and sold it out as soon as they could, the strikers could only keep it going because of the Left: the Women's Trade Union League and the Socialist Party gave massive support to the strikers in the form of bail, publicity, fund-raising, and pickets. This illustrates the need to build communist leadership in the unions, to throw out the sellouts so that workers can defeat racism and sexism in our ranks and go on the offensive against the bosses.

The Lawrence textile strike of 1912 was another early lesson in the sexism of right-wing union traitors. It began over a pay-cut for women and child workers in the brutal New England mills of those days, in which women who were pregnant often worked at the looms until a few hours before giving birth. The strike eventually involved 30,000 workers of 25 different nationalities, about half of them women.

The leadership, because of the Left initiative from the rank-and-file and the IWW (International Workers of the World), was multiracial, united men and women, and organized mass picketing, winning the anti-sexist struggle to include women in the militant picket-lines. While these political strengths allowed the workers to win a pay increase after a three-month walkout, and to resist vicious police attacks directed particularly at the women and child picketers, the AFL unions opposed the strike, maneuvered to keep the Women's Trade Union League from joining it, and told the craft workers of the United Textile Workers to scab.

Unfortunately, the treason of the union leadership has not changed as the number of women in the work force has increased. During World War Two the bosses brought four million women into the labor force. Many were hired into previously all-male, all-white skilled jobs in heavy industry, where they made two-thirds more pay than in service industries. After the war the bosses wanted to lay off these women and black men and hire returning veterans. Instead of shortening the work week (30 hours work for 40 hours pay) and spreading the jobs around, which would have benefited all workers, the bosses wanted to save money and also prevent unrest among veterans, such as had occurred after World War One. The response of the union sellouts? The UAW, for example, did not lift a finger to protect their women members, and accepted the farce of defining seniority as what applied in 1941! As a result 3,350,000 women were laid off, most of them ending up in lower-paying jobs. Again, when

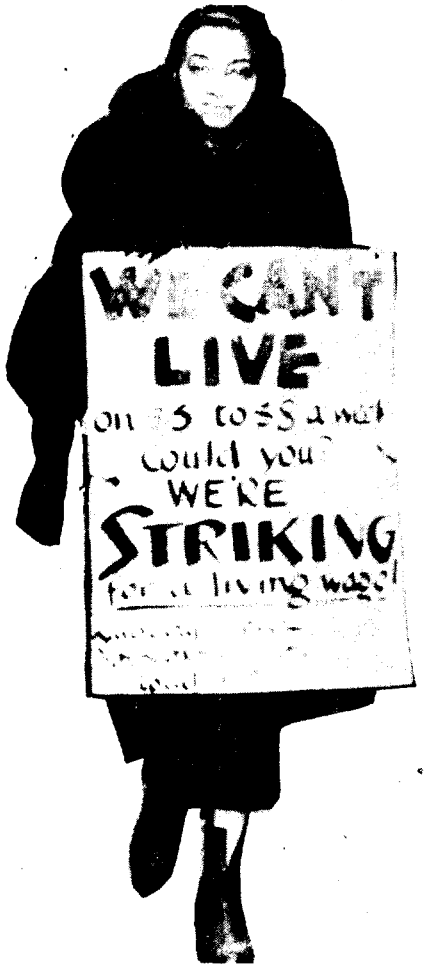
Congress came out with a Full Employment Bill in 1945 that denied women the right to a job, labor leaders were silent.

This is the background of the present-day leaders of the garment unions. Now, as fascism and a new imperialist war becomes necessary to "save" the capitalist system, they will move even further to the right. Sexism in the garment industry will only be smashed when workers are led by anti-racist, anti-sexist, communist forces.

RANK-AND-FILERS FIGHT SEXISM: A HISTORY OF MILITANT STRUGGLE

In glaring contrast to the sexism and other capitalist ideas of the virtually all-male garment union traitors stands the militant history of women and men of the rank-and-file of the working class, who have shown in the U.S. and in every other country that they will fight sexism and the capitalist class to the bitter end. This history, which includes stirring episodes from the history of the garment workers, is a living refutation of the paternalistic lie that women are not militant, that they need to be protected from struggle, that men have to do all the fighting or the leading.

To the bosses, sexism means low wages for all workers. For black women, the exploitation is doubled.

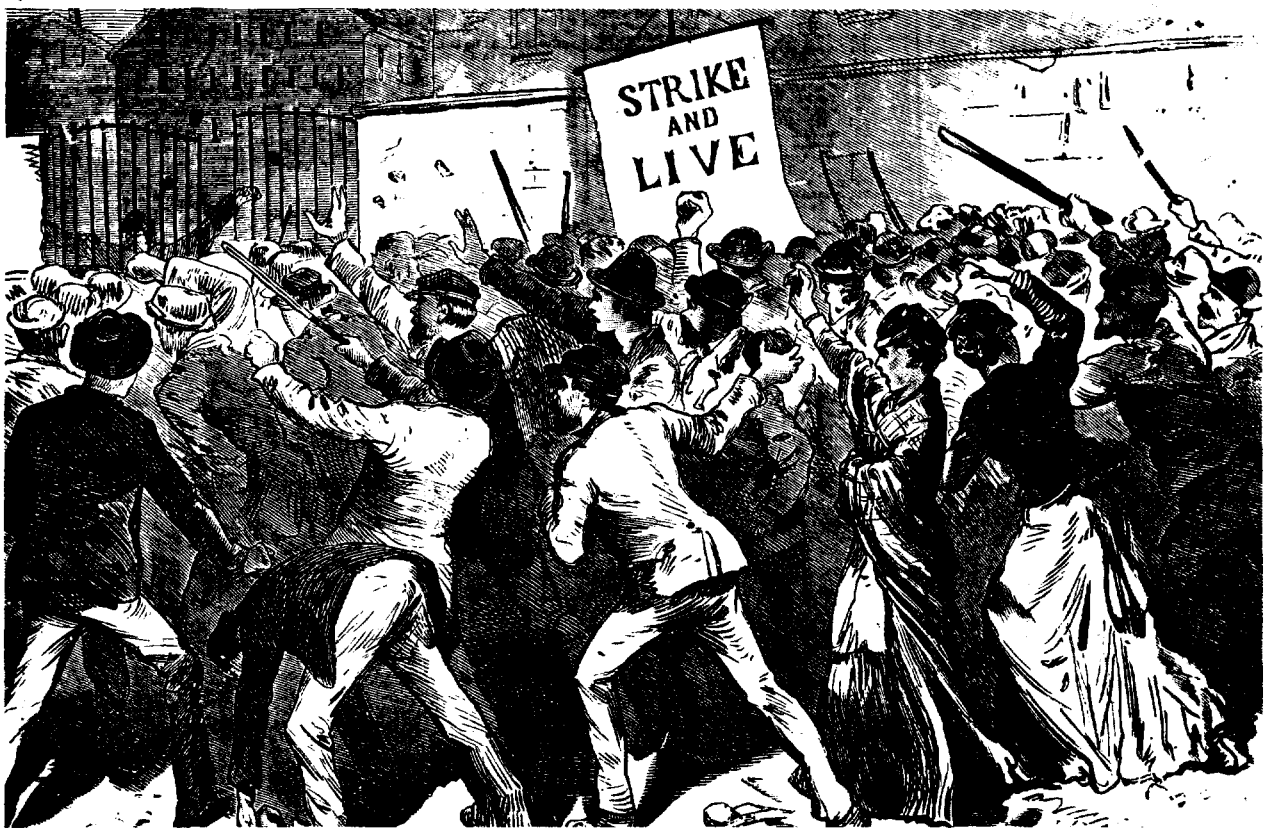


Harriet Tubman

Women aren't marginal workers in the economy, and they have never been marginal fighters in working class battles. In the continual class warfare of the past hundred years working-class women have participated. Every major battle in U.S. labor history has involved women. The communists, having no need to diminish women to the status of protected children, organized women who played an important role in the Russian and Chinese revolutions, World War II, and recent anti-imperialist and anti-fascist struggles such as Vietnam, Nicaragua and Iran. Women workers' militancy reflects their material lives: in fact, in many ways capitalist oppression cuts deepest into the lives of women workers. And the bosses' bullets and bombs don't differentiate according to sex. Women are involved, whether they want to be or not. It's only sexist ideology that holds us back from developing the objective fact, that women belong in the revolutionary front lines—and have always been found there, sexism notwithstanding!

A few examples:

- No one protected black women from U.S. slavery. Thousands of slaves of both sexes risked their lives to rebel or escape. One of the most famous was Harriet Tubman, who escaped alone from a Maryland plantation. In the North, she became part of the Underground Railroad (its "General"), and returned nineteen times to the South, leading 300 slaves to escape. She was part of the planning team for John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, and would have been in the federal arsenal there, gun in hand, except for illness. A volunteer in the Union Army, she worked as nurse, spy and scout. She was respected for her knowledge of military science and planned an expedition against the Confederate Army.



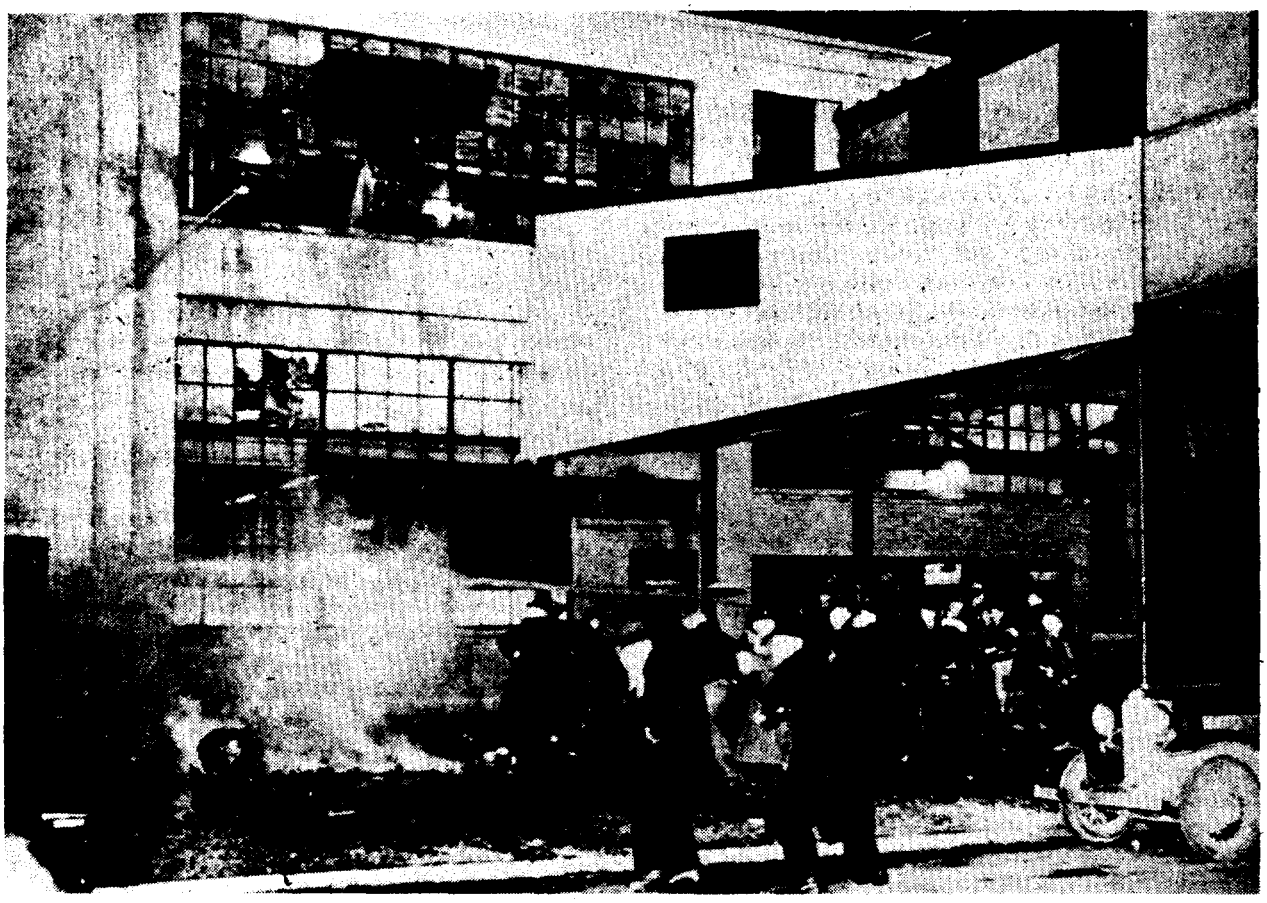
In the 1877 rebellions which shook Pennsylvania and other states, women fought alongside men, fighting not only scabs, but National Guard troops and police as well, as picture above shows.

• In 1877 the women and men of the Pittsburgh working class united in a full-scale insurrection, during a national railroad strike, to form the Pittsburgh Commune (on the model of the communist Paris Commune of 1871). They took over the whole city in a battle with 1,000 militiamen, setting fire to thousands of railroad cars and other property of the Pennsylvania Railroad. They held the city for over two weeks. The demonstrations and assaults on the railroad involved almost every working woman and man in Pittsburgh. It was a life and death struggle, because the railroad had cut starvation wages by 10%.

• One of the most militant battles of U.S. labor history took place in Homestead, Pa., on July 5, 1899, during a strike against a Carnegie-owned steel mill. Striking against a 26% wage cut, the steel-workers were even more importantly fighting for the existence of their union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, which Carnegie had vowed to smash. A three-mile fence, fifteen feet high, was built around the factory and down to the river. Carnegie tried to bring an army of 300 Pinkertons up the river on barges, but thousands of men, women and children broke down the fence and ran down to the river to keep the barges from landing. Shooting broke out, the strikers tried to set fire to the barges, and by the end of the day the Pinkertons surrendered. Eventually the strike was lost, but this episode showed that women and men will fight side by side against everything the bosses can throw at them, when our class interests are at stake.

• The general strike of the shirtwaist makers in 1909 in New York was mentioned above, showing the treason of the union leaders. The spirit of the rank-and-file women strikers on that occasion shook the city bosses, and showed U.S. workers that immigrant workers were not only here to stay, but were leaders of the class struggle. Unaided by the union, teenage women fought professional thugs on the picket lines, and when this was exposed in repeated court cases, the strikers beat up the prostitutes that the bosses used to replace the gangster strikebreakers. Leaders from the ranks blossomed during this strike, young immigrant women working twenty-two hours a day between mimeograph, picketline, jail, hospital and workers' homes to build their strike. It was the fiery speech of a young woman worker in a meeting called by the union hacks at Cooper Union that began the strike. Many revolutionaries were born in this strike, who remained to lead the garment workers in the strikes and the struggle with the union traitors in the next fifteen years.

• In the Depression Thirties, women workers came to the fore again. A key struggle of that period, which led to the forming of the UAW and other CIO industrial unions in the heart of the U.S. working class, was the Flint Sitdown Strike of 1936-37 (see the PLP pamphlet, *Sit Down!* for a



full history). The "Battle of Bulls Run" during this strike saw the bulls (police) running from the women and men strikers: it was a battle against riot police to prevent the strikers inside from being evicted. The pickets outside, including many wives of the strikers, and the men inside, fought for five hours against gunfire and gas, throwing heavy hinges, bottles and the cops' own tear gas at them. Not only did they win this battle; the women formed a Women's Emergency Brigade—the famous Red Berets, armed with pipes and two-by fours—which remained an important political and military section of the strikers' army until the final victory.

Again, women communists played a leading role, and many new revolutionaries among the women were recruited. This took place in spite of the sexism of the organizers, who had sent the women workers out of the plant (for the sake of "public opinion") when they seized it. The women of Flint proved that class consciousness can erase in one day the sexist training of a life-time, as they came out to hose the cops, overturn their patrol cars, and pelt them with lumps of coal. "Women of Flint! This is your fight!" one of the striker's wives, Genora Johnson, cried out over a bullhorn in the midst of the battle: "Join the picket-line and defend your job! Your husband's job! Your children's home!" At a later battle in the Flint struggle, the Red Berets smashed all the windows of one plant, from the outside, to defend the men

In the Flint strike of 1936-7, and others, the role of women was decisive. In the 'Battle of Bulls Run,' above, women with bricks and hinges stopped riot cops from evicting the strikers. Women below were members of the Women's Emertency Brigade—Red Berets—during the Flint Strike.

Women have also been among the guerrilla fighters in many revolutionary movements. Above, a member of the armed guerrilla forces that overthrew the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua last year.

fighting inside from tear gas. One woman Brigade member described this scene:

> They were fighting inside and outside the the plant. The fighting would have been much worse if it hadn't been for us. We walked right along with our flag at our head. The gas floated right out towards us. But we have been gassed before and we went right on.

After this fight, the Brigade regrouped to recover from the gas, and then went to defend another building: "Soon down the hill they came, a procession of women hundreds strong in bright red caps, singing "Hold the Fort, for We Are Coming!" The women then formed a mass, armed picket-line in front of the plant gates. Later, under threat of attack from the machine guns of the National Guard, the Brigade massed 5,000 women from Flint and the industrial towns all over the region. At the Fisher #1 plant, they formed a picket-line six deep completely encircling the plant. This strike, of course,won! It was a strategic victory for U.S. workers, and at several points it survived because of the militant leadership of women.

The scene outside Fisher#1 could have been seen in many countries as workers organized. The myth of women's passivity is often applied even more to Latin American women, but it's the same lie. At Rio Blanco, Mexico, during the textile workers' strike of 1906, this is what you would have seen:

> Women, with their shawls filled with tortillas and old bread, formed a line in front of the factory preventing anyone from entering. After burning stores in the Nogales and Santa Rosa factories, and freeing some prisoners in Orizaba, the strikers returned to Rio Blanco where they were confronted with federal troops. Lucrecia Toriz, illiterate and the mother of twenty-two children, stopped a group of soldiers with such a harangue that she convinced many to ut down their arms or turn against their superiors.

The thousands of women who fought Somoza in Nicaragua, and those who are currently fighting fascism in El Salvador, and who fought in the Mexican Revolution and other sisters of Lucrecia Toriz in the Los Angeles garment shops, carry on her history!

SEXIST IDEOLOGY HURTS ALL WORKERS

We have seen from history that the objective oppression of women workers, sexism in practice, has never been fought by the union traitors, but has been fought by the rank-and-file worker, both male and femle, and by the Left in the labor movement. The tradition of struggle against sexism can win, if it is incorporated into the struggle for socialism. But sexist ideology, as we saw in the stories of struggle from the Anti-Racist Garment Workers' Union organizers, is a big obstacle to our success. Again, we trace these ideas to the ruling capitalist class, not just to history or habit, or to men in general. Sexist ideas are bosses' ideas, imposed on the workers. It is the job of anti-sexists and communists among the workers to expose these ideas whenever they surface. A specific struggle against sexist ideology is essential to win, even at the very earliest stage of the struggle.

Sexist ideology is a set of ideas with a function: its purpose is to justify the super-exploitation of women by the bosses. This super-exploitation means the following: 1) women's pay is 58% that of men; 2) women are confined to the worst jobs;

3) women are paid nothing for the home work of sustaining the present and future generation of workers—an essential service for the capitalist class; 4) women are held back from organizing by the social fascist union misleaders; 5) women are subjected to all kinds of sexual abuse. The essence of sexist ideology is to claim that all this is justified because women are inferior to men, just as racist ideology tries to justify racist super-exploitation by claiming black, Latin or other groups are inferior to whites. As a whole and in detail, sexist ideology is false.

'The Weaker Sex'

Sexist ideology, like racism, takes a physical feature of women and draws psychological and behavioral conclusions from it that are simply lies, contradicted by experience. Women bear children, and so are slightly less active than men for a short period of their lives, if they have children. Also, on the average, women are usually less muscular than men. These biological factual differenees between men and women are supposed to justify the whole elaborate pattern of sexist myth. A full adjustment for these facts could easily be made in a socialist society by provision for maternity leaves and by technlogical changes in job processes.

Under socialism women and men would participate equally in all activity-production, politics, culture. It is capitalist society (and, before that, other class-exploiting societies) that creates the patterns of unequal difference between women and men—not "nature," not the facts about women and men, but only the profit and power needs of our exploiters!

The first profit the bosses derive from the "weaker sex" line is their ability to avoid paying women a wage for their work in the household and in child care. Before the wage system, women shared in the work of production. Women shared production, and shared in the product. But in the capitalist system of production, the wage is the only way workers share in what they product. Women who do household work certainly contribute to production: they sustain the labor power, the ability to work, of the producers, and they reproduce the working class. But under capitalism such work is simply not compensated. Some capitalist governments pay a child endowment, or Aid to Dependent Children program as in the U.S. This merely acknowledges in a token way that the boss class as a whole needs women to produce and sustain its future wage-slaves. But capitalists have never acknowledged the obvious truth that they benefit enormously from not paying wages for housework and child care.

Socialism will abolish slavery in the home. Women who spend part of their lives at this part of the production process will be compensated at the same rate as any worker in production outside the home. Socialism, in addition, will socialize household work and child care, so that both become more collective, less isolating to the workers, and less the province of women workers (thus breaking down the sexist division of labor or sex-coding of occupations).

Of course, the bosses are forced to recognize reality even while they lie about it. In modern industrial society, the sexual division of labor between home-working women and men who work in production on a job, between the caretaker women and the producer men, the moneyless women and the breadwinner men, has mostly broken down. Most women work most of their lives in the U.S., outside the home. The reality has changed already under capitalism, at least for most women; but the "weaker sex" line still prevails to justify job inequality and exploitation. Even if women were treated equally on the job, but come to *another* full-time job at home, she can hardly be said to have won real equality. Only under socialism can sexual equality become the social practice: men and women would equally share and be trained to do household and child care. Women belonging only in the home, women as a weaker sex, will become nonsensical concepts, lacking any reality.

Sexism in practice has been fought by rank-and-file workers both male and female, and by the left.

Women who can be drawn into the workforce at need, and siphoned off again back into the family when they are no longer needed also provides the boss with an industrial reserve army. The immigrant or minority workers (the other principal source of the reserve army of labor the capitalist system always needs), home-working women, are forced to accept jobs at poor terms and to accept the status of reserve-army worker. This key material benefit to the bosses of the "women-belong-in-the-home" ideology should be stressed more than it is. It is another example (like racism directed at other traditional reseve-army groups) of how the super-exploitation of women weakens the wage-levels and the political strength of the whole working-class. If everyone had the right to a

"The family comes first," the bosses say—until they need some extra hands in the fields or in the mill. These children participating in a 1980 farmworker strike with their parents, know exactly where the family comes for the bosses.

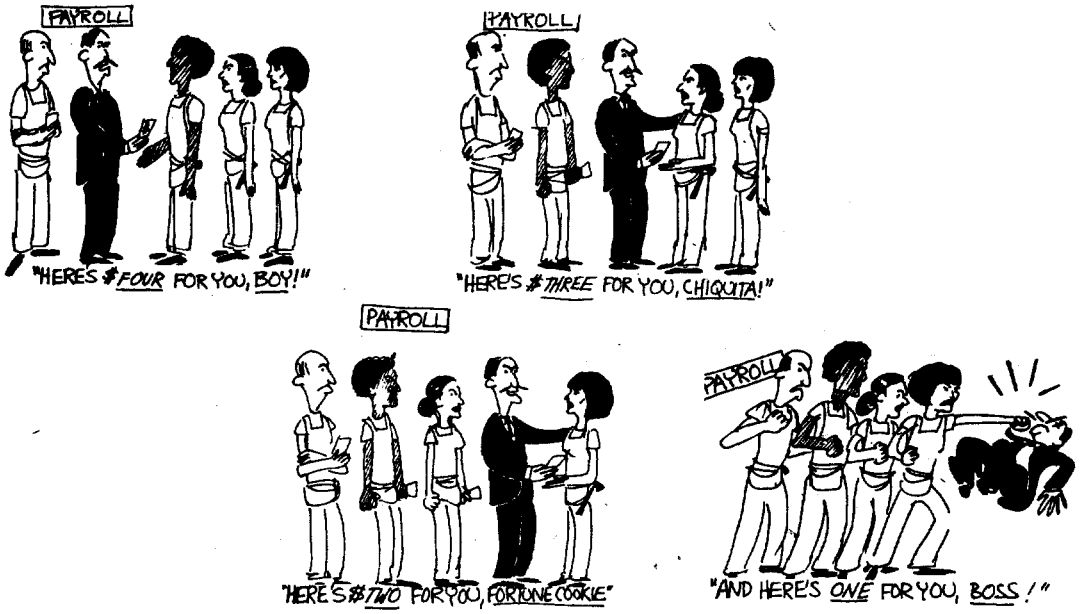
job as a basic human right (no capitalist has ever conceded this!) there would be no easy substitution of lower-paid workers for union-scale workers and the boss' greater need for workers at a particular time would lift the wages of all workers, rather than leaving some wages the same and actually lowering others. This is a graphic example of how a sexist or racist injury to one group of workers is an injury to all.

It is no wonder the bosses work overtime to sustain the lie of "the weaker sex." To the extent that women and men workers believe it, the boss gets away with murder! As the number of women working, and the proposal to draft women into the army, and the agitation for "equal pay for equal work" undermines this myth, the bosses' ideologists have to shift ground. These days the basis for this argument is not so much child-bearing or musculature (before that, it was the bible or some other sacred book) as it is the Gene, that new deity of a bankrupt science. The sociobiologists want us to believe that we are programmed to be sexist genetically, that so-called sexist behavior is really genetically determined. This is an echo of the notorious sociobiology of racism. The convergence of these far-out reactionary ideas with the shift to fascism is not accidental.

But extreme as these theses of sexist genes may appear, they are being very seriously promoted. The new curriculum at Harvard, which is being imitated at many colleges, includes both Edward O. Wilson on Sociobiology and Richard Herrnstein on Crime and Society as core courses. This goes along with business as usual in the media and culture, a good example of which recently was the film on the Triangle Fire (a real event in which a New York garment boss burned workers alive). The film shows the women workers as child-like and the only union organizer as a male cutter. In the real world, this fire in 1911 occurred in the very shop from which the great general strike had been launched—by militant women—a strike in which the male cutters had folded the fastest! The real history was that the women's place was in the struggle, and leading the struggle, and that the immigrant women and socialist women were the best fighters and leaders. Films like *Salt of the Earth* and *Bed and Sofa* and novels like *God's Bits of Wood* (about a railroad strike in Senegal) can be used to show the opposite idea, women's place in the collective—at work, at home, in struggle, in the revolution.

'The Family Comes First'

The identification of women with their own family unit (to the exclusion of their lives as workers and class-conscious political people) is the staple idea of one influential form of bosses' propaganda—advertisements. When women follow this idea to the extent of avoiding struggle ("I can't fight the bosses; I have to raise my family"), or when men hold women back from struggle for



the same reason, the working class suffers. All of us—men, women and children—are faced with the threat of fascism and world war, with unemployment and the draft, with inflation and racism, the KKK and the Nazis . . . We have a choice. Either we organize ourselves as a class to fight, to seize power, or the bosses send us to our graves quietly. All the efforts in the world to raise healthy children and provide a decent home will be useless if we don't defend ourselves against the bosses' attacks on our class. The war-making imperialists plan to slaughter on the battle-fields the very children we are now raising!

The stress on the family unit as opposed to the class unit, the whole working class, is a bourgeois idea. The communist idea of the family includes an outward-looking loyalty to all working people, the family as a small collective within the larger collective of the working class. The larger collective moves the smaller: as our class advances, our families advance, not the other way around. Our responsibility to our own spouse and children, if we're married, should blend in with our larger responsibility to our entire class, not contradict it. Both men and women need to see this more clearly; to repudiate the bourgeois ideas of family as a haven from struggle, a center of self-accumulation of stuff, a little nest. The attractiveness of this idea, if it has any, lies mainly in illusion. The divorce rate, the problems of children, the neurosis and mental illness that mark this society don't suggest we are all thriving in our nests and havens! Who can afford the material gluttony the family of the T.V. and Hollywood delights in? The oppressiveness of life on the job may be even worse than coming home to unpaid bills, worried people, rising rents, and other features of life in the family, but that is hardly an argument! The truth is that personal love and trust is the great strength of working-class families, whatever the oppressiveness of their lives. This is not a product of the family but of proletarian culture as a whole. We preserve and heighten this solidarity with each other not by retreating from the class struggle but by jumping into it with both feet.

Some workers may be too overwhelmed by family responsibilities to participate in struggle. But we can find a solution to this in the larger collective. There are always other workers who will voluntarily watch our children for us during a demonstration, strike or meeting. And instead of seeing children as precious little objects to be preserved from trouble, we can help them get involved themselves, as older children already are in InCAR and PLP, and as they always have been in the great revolutionary battles of our class.* Families can be a great source of encouragement and renewal in the class struggle. With the barriers of sexism down—the class struggle outside the family is the best context for that to happen in—the closest tie many of us have can help us keep on fighting in face of defeats and obstacles. But this is the opposite of the bourgeois view of the family, and it can only be won if sexism is understood and defeated.

'Male Supremacy.' A Loser for Men.

The bourgeois idea is clearly that sexism benefits men. Life may be tough, but at least you can lord it over some woman . . . The striking similarity to the phony appeal of racism to white workers is again clear in this idea. Perhaps the sharpest way to show how this idea hurts men as well as women is to quote the old saying "She who is kicked kicks back." Sexism pretty clearly destroys relationships between women and men—not in some vague way, either, as the number of divorces, murders, and family fights shows. In the current war climate, the macho myth leads men

* Sembene's novel *God's Bits of Wood*—the title refers to children—is also an excellent discussion text on the political role of children.

only one way—down, to their graves. Remember where all those strutting SS men finished up. The bosses love to see workers, especially young men, fall for racism and sexism; forming a personality around these ideas equips you only for the hatred of your fellow workers and a life fighting for the boss.

The false ideas men are taught since childhood, that they are superior to women, the stronger sex, and so forth, soon become unmasked as they enter adulthood and learn that under capitalism not just women are treated as inferior. They learn that all the lies of superiority are baseless, and that under this system they too are destined to be exploited and wasted. This is why revolutionary communist and anti-sexist ideas are vital to men workers. They must learn to put the blame where it belongs —on the bosses. If they do not see this, they may because of sexist conditioning blame their frustrations on women: friends, mothers, wives, co-workers. This leads many times to drinking, wife-beating, and infidelity. This behavior is the logical outcome of individualism, sexist perversion for men. Working-class men are very open to anti-sexist ideas precisely because they know about oppression. Like all bourgeois ideology, sexism can be overcome by workers because it is strongly contrary to their class interests. Sending the women out of the plants in the Flint strike: did that help win? The women fighters on that picket line must have shattered a lot of sexism in a lot of men's minds!

Feminism Divides Workers

The bourgeois feminism of the women's liberation organization may not be strong as an organized movement among working-class women (which itself says volumes about its class character as an ideology), but it influences a lot of people. Just as nationalism blames white workers for racism, feminism blames male workers for sexism. Both ideologies have workers fighting each other instead of the boss, and are especially harmful because they appeal often to people who are the most fed up with sexism and racism, the most ready to fight. As an organized movement, feminism has hurt the struggle of women and men workers. Every struggle feminists raise in the wrong way: equal pay for equal work becomes a struggle against men workers on the same job, for instance. The leadership of the feminist movement, is bourgeois to the core. Their leaders support the Carters, Kennedys, Reagans, etc. Gloria Steinham of Ms magazine was a CIA agent. They pose the fight against sexism to the anti-racist and revolutionary struggles, when all three reinforce each other and grow stronger fighting under the same flag—the red flag of socialist revolution. Except for middle-class women trying to become top executives for a bigger slice of the profit pie for themselves (like the struggle of the black and Latin middleclass for entry into the ruling class), the feminist movement will decline again until a real working-class surge develops. Then the bosses will trot out their politicians and thinkers—feminists, pacifists, nationalists, and phony "socialists"—to try to sidetrack people. But workers will reject feminism for socialism, as they always have done around the world, and unite, women, and men, in the true revolutionary front for workers' power.

SMASH SEXISM! FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM!

The PLP program to smash sexism in the garment industry and in society is a mass revolutionary base for workers' power. Our work in the industry is to win a mass base around communist ideas—ideas in this article—along with many developments of revolutionary ideas which will come from workers themselves in struggle. We also work in and support InCAR and the InCAR program for an anti-racist union:

1) $7 an hour minimum wage; no piece-work; equal wages for women workers.

2) 30 hours work for 40 hours pay—a 6 hour day for 8 hours pay.

3) Industry-wide strike to win these demands and an Anti-Racist Garment Workers Union.

4) No deportations; amnesty for all undocumented workers; strikes against all boss-inspired Immigration Department raids.

5) Union organizing of, by and for the rank and file: we rely on the workers, the real "experts," to sweep through shop after shop signing up workers into the Anti-Racist Union.

6) Day care centers for garment workers' children.

If you want to help destroy the rotten racist and sexist conditions in the garment industry this is what you can do:

1) Obtain pamphlet copies of this article (use coupon on last page of this issue), circulate it in your shop and give it to your friends and family to read.

2) Subscribe to **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** and circulate our revolutionary weekly newspaper to other workers, family and friends.

3) Join the InCAR Anti-Racist Garment Workers Union and become an active organizer in your shop. Contact us and we will discuss how you can do this in an effective way.

4) Contact PLP so that you can become a member of a study group and learn more about communist ideas and the science of Marxism-Leninism.

"No more tradition's chains shall bind us" sings the Communist *Internationale:* sexism, like all the ideas of exploiting classes, is going to go. Revolutionaries, women and men, will smash sexism!

UNITE AGAINST RACISM

By J.R.P.

Part I: The Early Years

Auto Workers and Communism

By following a single industry over an extended period of time, it is possible to answer some basic questions about the role Communists have played in the American labor movement. This article begins such an examination of the role of Communist workers and organizers in the automobile industry from 1928 to 1950.* Some criteria for judging Communists has been suggested by Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels in the Communist Mainifesto:

> The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand practically the most advanced and resolution section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

Communists, Marx and Engels continued, fight for the "immediate aims" and "momentary interests" of the working class, but they also attempt to build the movement of the future, socialism, in the movement of the present.

This analysis suggests certain questions for us to ask: Did Communists provide tactical leadership in the movement of the present or, in other words, the struggle for unionization? Did they have a strategic perspective on that movement which shaped their work in the struggles in which they were involved? Most important, were they building the movement of the future, a socialist movement, in the movement of the present, or were they totally involved in the movement of the present? Or did they have an overall strategic perspective which excluded building a socialist movement in favor of a broad, anti-

Workers on an auto-plant assembly line shortly after World War I. Miserable wages, frequent firings, speedup and brutal harassment were the rule of the day, as the Auto Workers' Union began its drive.

fascist front? If so, how did that perspective shape their day-to-day organizing and trade union work? In short, was the Communist Party of the United State ever a revolutionary party, and was its trade union work ever revolutionary?

Of course, it should be admitted right away that some answers to these questions depend on one's political perspective today. The Progressive Labor Party's assessment of different historical experiences of Communist movements has changed greatly, particularly with Road to Revolution III and "Reform and Revolution." My own attitudes toward the Communist movement have changed rather radically over the twelve years which I have spent studying Communist union activity. My conclusions about what is and is not revolutionary reflect my own political perspective now, and not necessarily that of PLP. Hopefully, making the historical record of Communist activity in auto available to party members and friends will make further debate and discussion much easier.

THE EARLY YEARS

In the nineteen-twenties, unionism was weak in the automobile industry. In 1911, the old Carriage and Wagon Workers International Union, which had been affiliated with the Knights of Labor, received permission from the AFL to add automobile workers to its jurisdiction. Two years later, jurisdictional disputes with the International Association of Machinists caused the AFL to rescind its permission. When the union refused to stop organizing auto workers, it was expelled from the federation. The Automobile Workers Union, as the renamed United Automobile, Aircraft, and Vehicle Workers of America was more commonly called, grew rapidly during the First World War, but was decimated in the open shop drive of the early 1920s, and reduced to a small local in Detroit and an even smaller one in New York. In 1927, a Communist auto worker named Phil Raymond was elected general secretary of the Detroit local by the narrow margin of a single vote.

*The information in these articles is drawn from an unpublished dissertation: James R. Prickett, *Communism and the Communist Issue in the American Labor Movement, 1920-1950,"* **(Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1975), 101-297. Full documentation is available in that dissertation; only partial citations will be offered here.**

In its early years, the Automobile Workers Union, or AWU, conducted a series of minor and mostly defensive strikes. The consequences of a lost strike were severe. At the Budd Wheel Company, for example, one entire department struck in response to a sixty percent wage cut. The entire department was fired, and all workers were placed on a blacklist. In one third of the strikes recorded by the union in which an outcome is listed, active strikers were fired. Only 4 of the 24 strikes were for wage increases, while 15 were in response to a wage cut. Yet the workers were not entirely unsuccessful. In 8 strikes lasting from an hour and a half to five days, workers were able to get wage cuts rescinded.

Under Raymond's leadership, the Automobile Workers Union evolved from an independent and a political union into the nucleus of a self-proclaimed revolutionary union affiliated with the Communist-led trade union federation, the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). The summer following Raymond's election saw the first explicitly radical material in the union's newspaper, the Auto Workers News. The July issue featured a banner headline proclaiming the seven hour work day for Ford workers in the Soviet Union, and the following month an editorial advised workers: "When you vote, let it be class against class—VOTE COMMUNIST." At a convention in May, 1930, called by the AWU IN Detroit, a new AWU was formed, affiliated with the Trade Union Unity League, and Raymond was elected general organizer and editor of the union newspaper.

The TUUL-affiliated AWU received its first major test less than two months after its reorganization with the Fisher Body strike in the summer of 1930. Skilled workers in the Fisher Body plant in Flint, Michigan were joined by the rest of the workers in a fairly small strike. Communists, however, noted that this was "the first time in American auto history" that "all the workers in a single factory have walked out on strike" and called it "the largest and most important struggle in the history of the auto industry." Communists were not involved in the original walkout, but on the third day of the strike, in a mass meeting, workers voted to work with the Auto Workers Union and elected a strike committee of close to 120 workers. After the vote, Caesar Scavarda, the Chief of Police in Flint, was quoted as saying that since "most of the strikers joined a Communist organization," they will receive "no more consideration than Reds do any place in the country." Scavarda's testimony before a friendly congressional committee on the strike revealed both his philosophy of law enforcement and some of the handicaps faced by Communist labor organizers:

> Mr. Nelson: What charge did you make against them that you might arrest them?
> Mr. Scavarda: There was not any charge.
> Mr. Nelson: You just arrested them?
> Mr. Scavarda: That is all.
> Mr. Bachman: Why, you arrest them for disorderly conduct, do you not.
> Mr. Scavarda: Well, possibly that would be a good excuse. There is not any particular law we can act on.

Police action against the strikers took two forms: the dispersal of gatherings of strikers, either at the plant or in meeting halls and the interrogation of individual workers. Scavarda hauled in workers who had signed membership cards in the AWU and "asked them if they were members of the Communist Party; if they believed in Communism, Sovietism, and they said 'absolutely not.'"

But outside repression was not the only problem of the strike: internal contradictions were primary. A skilled worker named Cecil Comstock who had taken leadership early in the strike denounced the AWU as a Communist organization and called for a return to work after some concessions were made for skilled workers. Although close to 600 workers had signed AWU membership cards, Comstock's denunciation and leadership of a back to work movement, coupled with police attacks, were too much for the union to handle. Assessing the strike, the party's trade union director wrote:

> in the Flint strike . . . the most skilled workers maintained leadership of the strike and in reality carried through the social fascist policy . . . In Flint, the further typical mistake was that the comrades did fight against the Comstock policies but after defeating him in the strike com mittee did not bring these issues before the mass of the strikers but considered it merely as a "family quarrel." The result was that when Comstock was ready for open betrayal, the masses were not prepared for the situation.

One hundred thousand workers marched against unemployment under the banner of the Communist Party.

The Flint strike suggested a general pattern for strikes led by the AWU which would emerge later in the Detroit strike wave of 1933. The AWU would have either no organization, as in Flint, or a small group of members inside the plant when a

Millions of workers around the country took part in mass campaigns and marches against unemployment and hunger, many led by the Communist Party. In Detroit, over 100,000 marched under the party's banners.

strike broke out. After the strike began, AWU leaders would present a coherent program, call for the election of a large and representative strike committee, urge mass picketing and an alliance with unemployed organizations, and work closely with the elected strike committee. Thus, the notion that the Communists were intensely sectarian during this period is mistaken.

The years following the Flint strike were ones of intense activity and substantial growth for the CP in Detroit. Much of that growth took place outside of the AWU. Evidence that the CP may have been stronger in Detroit than in any other American city is not hard to find. The Daily Worker reported that the largest membership of the party was in the Detroit district and after a recruiting drive the Communist newspaper indicated that Detroit led all districts in new members. One hundred thousand workers marched against unemployment under the banner of theCommunist Party and the Unemployed Councils in Detroit, as compared with 25,000 in Cleveland and 50,000 in Chicago. In the report of the party's political committee, Earl Browder noted that the "struggle against evictions . . . has been the most living part of our work," but "the only place I know where it has really been systematically approached was Detroit."

THE FORD MASSACRE

The most famous and tragic of the demonstrations held by the Party and the Unemployed Councils was the 1932 Hunger March to the Ford plant in Dearborn, Michigan. Marchers proceeded through Detroit without incident, but found the entrance to Dearborn blocked by rows of armed policemen. (Dearborn was a company town, totally and openly dominated by the Ford Motor Company, and by Henry Ford personally.) The marchers refused to stop, and the police attacked, beating demonstrators with clubs and firing tear gas at the marchers. Suddenly, from behind the gates of the heavily guarded Ford factory, Ford's secret service men were given the order to open fire on the marchers. Although some initial press reports were openly hostile to the marchers, no one introduced any evidence to suggest that the demonstrators were armed or even that Ford security forces had reason to believe that they were armed. They simply were too close to the Ford building. Four young men paid for that crime with their lives. Joe York, district organizer for the Young Communist League, Joe Bussell, Joe DeBlasio, and Coleman Leny were killed. Twenty-three more men and women were seriously injured, and scores were wounded or hurt.

Communists responded to the killings in two closely related ways: first, they called for intensified work in Detroit as the best answer to what they called the "Ford Massacre," and second, they held both Henry Ford and liberal Detroit mayor Franklin Murphy responsible for the killings. Communists knew that attacking Murphy, who had considerable working class support, would make it more difficult to organize a large demonstration against the murders. But they did not compromise on this point since they believed it was politically crucial to convince workers that the liberal politician was no more their friend than the capitalist. Murphy, of course, insisted that the city of Detroit bore no responsibility for the shootings. In a technical sense, he was right, because the shootings were done entirely by the Dearborn police. But Detroit police had used the occasion to raid the headquarters of several Communist organizations in Detroit, and Detroit police assisted Dearborn police in "restoring order" after the shootings. Commenting on the incident, Murphy told Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union that there "has been much abuse of the free speech policy of the city recently by the Communists."

Although the murders were frightening, Communists responded in a spirited and militant manner. Along with the Detroit Unemployed Councils, the Communist Party sponsored a mass funeral march based on the slogan, "Smash the Ford-Murphy Police Terror." Both Communists and their opponents agreed that the march was impressive. Josephone Gomon, Mayor Murphy's secretary, remembered it as

> a very dramatic scene in Detroit. The paraders marched down Woodward Avenue behind the four red-flag draped caskets; and as they came, they sang the Internationale. It was said that 60,000 people marched and the volume of singing could be heard all over the city. It reverberated.

The Detroit Times reported that "thousands of right arms, with fists clenched were raised in the Communist salute." The Ford section of the Communist Party reported that, in Italy, "the police and fascist militia, taken by surprise, were powerless" to prevent workers from sacking a Ford plant as a protest against the massacre. Similar attacks were reported throughout South America and in Germany. The girl friend of one of the murdered marchers "pledged over his dead body that I shall never rest until his murderers will pay—and pay dearly." When it became clear that no indictments would be brought against the murderers, the party organized a workers' jury to publicly try Ford, his security chief Harry Bennett, and Murphy.

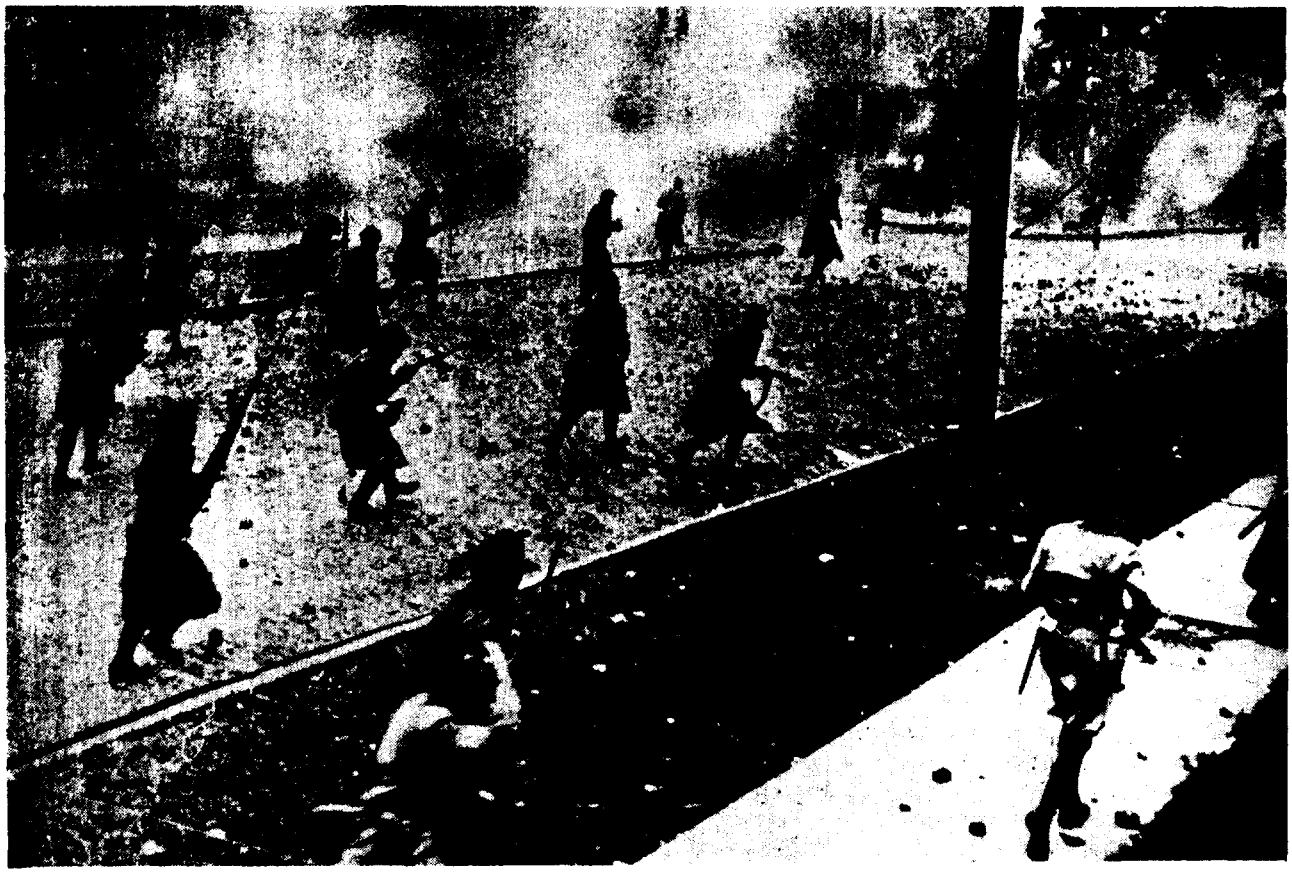
In short, the Communist response to the massacre was impressive: without diluting either their criticism of liberal politicians or their support for Communism, the Party was able to build a demonstration ten times as large as the original march on the Ford plant. The Party had demonstrated an essential characteristic for a Communist Party: the ability to advance under attack.

THE BRIGGS STRIKE A TASTE OF VICTORY

Months after the massive funeral march, both the Ford Motor Company and the Briggs Manufacturing Company put through wage cuts without any serious resistance from the workers. The cuts sharply symbolized the party's weakness where it counted: in the factories. Following the cuts, Communists intensified their efforts to build the Auto Workers Union. It was a slow, difficult, unglamorous task. A meeting called after wage cuts in the Briggs Waterloo plant drew only two workers. A week later, a second meeting was held with only four workers. They decided to organize first around a single grievance: the practice of having men work two lathes. A poster signed by the AWU ridiculing any worker who would consent to working on two lathes was distributed throughout the plant. The poster, Raymond recalled, "resulted in considerable commotion in the shop; and a few days later the practice of running more than two lathes at a time was discontinued." The small nucleus of workers continued to meet and regularly distributed small leaflets which were passed hand-to-hand inside the plant.

In January, 1933, the AWU learned that tool and die makers at the larger Briggs plant on Mack Avenue had been forced to sign rate change slips authorizing the company to cut their wages. The AWU began immediately to organize against a possible wage cut at the Waterloo plant. Passes were issued to trusted workers inviting them to a meeting on January 9 which drafted a statement urging workers to not sign any rate change slips and warning of an impending wage cut. Twenty-eight workers attended the meeting. The following day Raymond spoke at the shop gate during the lunch break and urged workers to attend a mass meeting that night. At the meeting, some workers challenged Raymond's leadership because of his widely known affiliations with the CP (he had been the CP's candidate for Mayor in 1930), but the majority of the sixty workers defeated an attempt to remove him. The workers voted to strike immediately if any wage cut was announced and to begin now to organize for a future strike even if there was no wage cut. Demands were drawn up and a strike committee was elected.

On January 21, the company announced a twenty per cent wage cut in one department. Work stopped in that department as strike committeemen confronted the plant manager to demand that the wage cut be rescinded. When the manager



The Electric Auto-Lite Strike in Toledo, Ohio, above, was just one of many where the bosses called out the National Guard to battle strikers and strike supporters when local cops were not enough.

refused, the committee called for a walkout "which was promptly obeyed by practically the whole shop." That evening a mass meeting of the strikers expanded the strike committee to include three AWU leaders and representatives from each department and formulated strike demands. Two days later, the strikers returned to work after the company verbally agreed to restore the original wage scale. Following the "clean cut victory," Joe Brown, who covered the strike for Federated Press, noted privately:

> The effect of the strike on the auto industry was electric. Wage cutting in other plants ceased. It was apparent that the auto workers were sullen and that other strikes were impending.
>
> The strike proved that strikes could be won even during a depression. At this time, a city registration of the unemployed revealed that about 160,000 workers were unemployed in Detroit.
>
> The strike victory caused an intensification of organizational work by the Auto Workers Union.

The Briggs Waterloo strike was only the first of a series of ten strikes to erupt in Detroit's auto plants in less than one month. The AWU concentrated its efforts on building a conference "of all workers, fraternal, and other organizations" committed to the organization of auto workers into an industrial union planned for January 22. On the morning of the conference, metal finishers walked off their jobs at the Highland Park plant. Raymond advised them to return to work in the afternoon and organize for a complete walkout the following day. The metal finishers followed Raymond's advice and led a walkout of all departments the following day. On the sidewalk in front of the factory workers met informally and selected a committee to talk to the management. Anthony Gerlach, one of the leaders of the AWU, addressed the workers while the committee went inside to negotiate. Leon Pody, one of the workers elected to the committee, recalled that when Walter Briggs was told that a Communist was speaking to "his" workers, he verbally guaranteed a fifty-cent minimum wage to quickly end the strike. Pody told Briggs that a written statement of the offer would bring the men back to work, but Briggs refused to commit anything to writing.

On January 24, the strike spread to the Briggs Mack Avenue plant. That evening a mass meeting of strikers was held with Raymond as the chair. Most observers agree that Raymond skillfully brought order out of confusion at this important organizational meeting. Raymond divided the group into smaller, departmental meetings to formulate demands. When the meeting reas-

Henry Ford's "Service Department" was the best-known of the company goon squads used against union organizers and strikers. They are seen above attacking UAW organizers at the huge River Rouge plant in 1937.

sembled, workers agreed on a series of demands including increased wages, the abolition of "dead time, the practice of having workers wait for work while on duty without being paid for the time spent," and the elimination of compulsory company insurance. As the strike progressed, more of the workers' grievances came to light. The company charged men for broken tools, and "in the case of repairs which had to be made to defective bodies, the wages of the repairer would be deducted from those of the men on the line." A woman who broke her finger was told to keep working. She worked for a week and was only sent home when she fainted on the job.

The AWU pressed for a strategy of mass picketing in an effort to close down both the Highland Park and Mack Avenue plants. The company was determined to keep both plants open. Clashes between strikers, police, and strike-breakers were frequent. At the Highland Park plant, outside the Detroit city limits, there were "many, many arrests and many injuries" and a "great deal of violence." Local police made a number of attempts to break up the picket lines. The lines held, but police arrested some workers on charges of "intimidating persons seeking to return to work." At the Mack Avenue plant, there was less violence, since police did not break up the picket lines. At both plants, however, police protection was given to strike-breakers. Although Detroit Mayor Frank Murphy insisted that he "ordered that the police not be used against the strikers in any way," his concept of neutrality favored the employers: "you must understand that . . . as long as a plant operates, and workers go to and from it, these workers are entitled to a certain amount of protection."

Although both plants remained open, production was severely reduced. On January 27, the Detroit Free Press, which had ignored the strike, reported that Ford plants were forced to shut down because Briggs was no longer supplying bodies for Ford cars. The corporation announced its intention to hire strikebreakers on January 30. By February 1, Briggs claimed that production had been resumed with 1200 workers in the Highland Park plant. On the same day, one thousand strikers voted to continue the strike.

The Communist position as partial leaders of the strike was due to two factors: the presence of a small group of Communists inside the plants, and the skillful organizing of party members outside the plants. Communists had not done sustained work in these particular plants over a long period of time; many workers were being introduced to the party, others had strong impressions, favorable or unfavorable, from previous contact with the party. There was, as might be expected, considerable disagreement and tension within the strike committee over the role of Raymond and the presence of a self-proclaimed revolutionary union, the Auto Workers Union. A few members of

the committee fully supported the AWU and some were friendly to the Communist Party. A larger group, but still a minority, opposed working with Communists from the beginning. But the vast majority of the strike committee accepted Communist leadership, but only in the sense that the Communists were experienced unionists. Indeed, the Communists themselves, as a party leader noted critically later, presented themselves as the "hired experts" to help the strikers win the strike "instead of bringing forward the Auto Workers Union as the organization that organized the strike, as the only union of workers in the auto industry." Raymond, for example, told reporters that "he had been hired by the strikers to organize their forces and that when his work is ended he will have no further connection with the Briggs men."

The company made Communist affiliations of the AWU its major public reason for refusing to negotiate with the strikers. As Briggs put it, "we will not allow the Communist-led strikers to hang Philip Raymond's red flag on the Briggs Manufacturing Company." 'Should we allow these people to continue with their strike," Briggs went on, "it would be another victory for the Communists." Another company official proclaimed that the strike was a "clear-cut issue between capital and Communism."

On February 3, the Daily Worker discussed, for the first time, dissension within the strike committee. As the Communist Party saw it, "the chief danger to the strike lies now in the fact that unstable elements, who have fallen under the influence of AFL and 'Socialist' misleaders, are now in control of the Mack Avenue strike committee." The workers "must elect a new strike committee at once." A leaflet signed by the AWU charged that the "leaders of the strike committee refused to accept the help of the unemployed, refused to close up the gates with a mass picket line, and permitted thousands of scabs to enter the Briggs plants." The leaflet called on workers to hold department meetings, re-elect a strike committee, and "reunite your ranks under the leadership of the Auto Workers Union."

Despite the precarious position of the AUW in the Mack Avenue strike, it continued to play a major role in the strike movement. On February 7, two-and-a-half hours after the Hudson Motor Car Company re-opened its plants, which had been closed to avert a strike, three thousand Hudson workers went out on strike. At the first mass meeting, according to Joe Brown, Raymond's leadership was "protested by about a dozen strikers because of his CP affiliation," but "the Auto Workers Union had control of the strike from beginning to end." On February 8, the negotiating committee selected John Schmies, a prominent Communist leader, to head the negotiations. On February 13, strikers went back to work after winning a wage increase and other concessions.

Gradually through the month of February, the AWU lost its position of leadership in the Mack Avenue plant. The eclipse of the AWU in the strike committee paralleled the general weakening of the strike. By March, the New Leader (a Socialist Party paper) was able to write that "the strike is in the hands of a rank and file committee, and the Socialist Party, the IWW, and the AFL are cordially cooperating in it." But the Socialists, who had already become a conservative organization in their zeal to oppose the Communists, had neglected two points. First, this rank and file committee was led by George Cornell, a conservative Briggs foreman, who adopted a pro-management position. Second, as Sidney Fine has noted, "by the beginning of March, the strike had for all practical purposes come to an end."

John W. Anderson, then a partisan of the IWW, and later a member of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, was one of the people who ascended to the strike committee after the Communists were ejected. He recalled two incidents which, in my opinion, reveal fundamental differences between anti-Communist radicals and Communists:

> Once when we were holding a mass meeting we received a call from the Highland Park strike committee saying that the Michigan State Police were about to break up the picket lines there. We rushed all the strikers we could get to reinforce the Highland Park picket lines. Our forces were too small to defy the State and Highland Park police. Picketing came to an end there the latter part of March.
>
> We (the negotiating committee) sat down across the table from Mr. W.O. Briggs, president, and other company officials. Mr. Briggs being the owner of the Detroit Tigers, it was natural to open the conversation with a few words about the Tigers and the coming baseball season. To my surprise this conversation

'Mr. Briggs being the owner, it was natural to open conversation with a few words about the Tigers.'

> continued for about fifteen minutes. When I became convinced that neither Mr. Cornell nor any other member of the committee was going to raise the issue of the strike, I decided to do so. The response to my question was stunned silence. Mr. Briggs and Mr. Cornell looked at me as if to say, "You have broken the agreement." After a few moments, the other members of the committee resumed the polite discussion of subjects that had nothing to do with the strike . . . **Since we were no longer having mass meetings, few of the strikers learned of what took place at the meeting.** (Emphasis added.)

Communists would probably have fought the police in spite of numerical weakness or, if they were badly outnumbered, would have organized a larger picket line the following day. The strike committee was unable to do this partly because it rejected the AWU strategy of unity between employed and unemployed workers, and partly because it had allowed the line to be dispersed without a struggle. More significantly, when the strike leaders sold out the strike, the elements of mass, democratic struggle which Communists had created—mass picketing and daily strike meetings—were absent. Non-Communists did not have the perspective of reliance on the workers which characterized the Communist approach.

By the end of the summer of 1933, the party's trade union director estimated that between 15,000 and 20,000 automobile workers had gone out on strike. More important, most of the victorious strikes had been led by the AWU, and none by the AFL. This impressive achievement has gone virtually unnoticed by historians. The AWU led the Briggs Waterloo strike, which triggered the strike wave, and the large and successful Hudson strike. In addition, it played a major role in the early stages of the Mack Avenue and Highland Park strikes. But, as we shall see in the second article in this series, the AWU lost most of the membership which had been built up in the strike and was never able to consolidate a stable membership as opposed to leading workers in strikes.

WERE THE COMMUNISTS REVOLUTIONARIES?

At this point, we should return to the criteria set forth over a hundred years ago by Marx and Engels. Communists, Marx and Engels wrote, fight for the "momentary interests" and "immediate aims" of the working class, but they also fight for class power and for socialism. In other words, Communists provide tactical and strategic leadership in the reform movement, while at the same time building a revolutionary movement. This, of course, suggests that there is a connection between the kind of work done in the reform movement and the perspective—revolutionary or reformist—which inspires that work.

Enemies of the Communist movement have argued that during this period Communists used workers in impractical and senseless, pseudo-revolutionary actions which were hopeless and ill-planned. On the contrary, we have seen in auto that Communists were clever and responsible tacticians who were responsible for an enormous (considering the party's size) portion of the collective resistance which workers made to the early years of the depression. In auto, the Communists organized large, democratically-run strike committees, in which they were in the minority, which conducted the major struggles of the period. The standard view of this period of Communist activity simply cannot be maintained.

But were the Communists revolutionary? What, in fact, was their program in the union movement?

Communists advocated a number of disparate measures which were linked by a common strategic vision: reliance upon the strength of a united working class. Communists viewed their program of militant mass picketing, unity with unemployed workers against the bosses, solidarity between black and white workers, and rank and file control of strike actions not as narrow trade union tactics, but as highly political measures designed to increase the combat effectiveness of the working class during a period of intense class struggle. All these measures were designed to do two things: overcome divisions within the working class, and create the institutions in which workers could exercise power. In the Detroit strike wave, Communists pressed for large, democratically elected strike committees and daily mass meetings of the workers, mass picketing conducted by both employed and unemployed workers, concrete strike demands in the interest of unemployed workers, anti-racist and anti-sexist demands centering primarily around unequal wage scales and discriminatory promotion practices, and so on. Each of these proposals can be seen either as an attempt to overcome divisions within the working class or to ensure mass participation and control of the strike by rank and file workers.

It could be objected here, and quite rightly, that these proposals are by no means revolutionary in themselves. One could even argue that they represent little more than common trade union sense. Yet trade union leaders today oppose virtually every one of these proposals. While the proposals, then, fall short of revolutionary politics, they can not be described as conventional trade unionism either.

My own view can be summed up in three propositions. First, that the party's trade union policy, while not revolutionary, was consistent with, and flowed from, **revolutionary ideas and strategy.** Second, that this is as much as one can expect from a trade union policy or, indeed, any policy in the reform movement. Third, if the party com-

Our party fights to build a base for revolution in the auto industry today, uniting white, black, Latin and Arab auto workers, as in photo above. Despite the continuing capitalist crisis in auto, it is still a key area for basebuilding.

bined this trade union program with aggressive, open, and continued advocacy of socialist revolution, it could lay claim to being a revolutionary party. If it soft-pedaled its revolutionary commitment to socialism, then it was a militant, reformist party.

This suggests certain ways to categorize Communist movements and parties which might be useful in clarifying periods in the history of the CPUSA as well as other parties. A party which simply advocates revolution without participation in the class struggle would be a sectarian (as well as ineffective) party. A party which has developed a strategy in the reform movement which is consistent with revolutionary politics and which can be argued for both in terms of its merits in the particular reform struggle and its roots in revolutionary politics can either be a revolutionary or a militantly reformist party. A party which has a strategy in the reform movement which is inconsistent with and contrary to revolutionary politics and ideas is a revisionist party.

What do I mean when I describe the program as not intrinsically reformist or revolutionary, but as consistent with revolution? A program consistent with revolutionary ideas would emphasize, as this one did, reliance on the workers, building of working class unity, militant struggle, and a refusal to play by the rules of the legal system. A program inconsistent with revolutionary ideas would emphasize relying on liberal politicians, labor lawyers, the government boards and agencies, understandings with the boss, etc. In the case of Communists in auto, this program was adopted consciously because of its consistency with a revolutionary perspective, but in the recent miners' strike similar ideas came to the fore without being motivated by revolutionary politics. This illustrates on the one hand the power of these ideas and programs, and, on the other, their shortcomings when they are removed from a revolutionary context.

I have great respect for the leadership which the Communists offered in this period and the program which they advanced. But I find it necessary to add that a program consistent with revolutionary politics, even one which had its origins in a revolutionary analysis, can not be substituted for conscious, open, agitation for and advocacy of socialist revolution. In any reform struggle, developing a program that grows out of a revolutionary analysis and provides sound tactical leadership is by no means easy. It is, in fact, a difficult, important, and crucial task. It is not, however, sufficient. In the midst of the union struggle, there is considerable evidence that Communists soft-pedaled their commitment to revolution and therefore I would suggest that even during the early years of the 1930s, the party was not offering a revolutionary program to workers.

PL★

By G.K.

Back to School

A Diary of Class Struggle

Our party is based in the working class. Our aim is to lead our class from the factories and the fields and the offices into the armed struggle for socialist revolution. We have also often said that students are a key force in the fight for socialism. Struggles on campus reflect many of the same issues of war, racism and capitalist oppression that we face in all our work. These struggles, linked to the fight of the whole working class, can spark a wider movement. As we move closer to war, more and more students will be entering the armed forces, and need to take our line with them. In cities where there is no concentration in a particular industry or community, campus work can be the source of recruitment that can then help to revitalize the entire work there. For these reasons, we decided that rebuilding campus work in St. Louis was important; the diary that follows is a record of that effort.

The efforts described here did not achieve all the results we aimed at. We did raise our internationalist, anti-imperialist-war line in a mass way, particularly in January and February. We made good contacts, but not enough; nor did we follow them up well enough. From these efforts one couple came to the March InCAR conference, but no one was brought to May Day.. Now, in the fall, there is again no campus work.

Our political work aims to build the party and move workers and students closer to a revolutionary outlook. We learn, positively and negatively, from every experience so that we may do better in the future. I believe that this campus work might have led to new recruits. Hopefully, this diary will be useful as part of the stuggle to improve and expand our work and smash the bosses.

Diary of classroom work

BACKGROUND

I am a former college teacher of philosophy (at the University of Missouri--St. Louis for seven years) who now works the midnight shift as a postal clerk. When I was teaching we recruited some students from the campuses, but since I was fired our campus work has disappeared and recruiting has stagnated. As a result, we decided to make an effort to rebuild our presence on the campus. I attended a student meeting in Chicago, and at that meeting it was proposed and agreed that I should take a course at UMSL to help that work. When I returned I was able to take a beginning political science class--American Politics--which meets at 9:30 on Tuesday and Thursday.

GENERAL PLAN FOR TIME USE ON CAMPUS

Sometimes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings I get off work at 7:00 AM. I plan to sell Challenge-Desafio every Tuesday and Thursday (after eating breakfast) before my class--if I get off work at 7:00. So far this has worked, and in three sales I have sold 55 papers. My off nights are Thursday and Friday. So I can come to campus fresh from a night's sleep on Friday. My plan is to do a CAR agitation, setting up a table, with PL literature available, every Friday for a couple of hours. So far I have done two of these, distributing about 1,000 leaflets each time. On Friday afternoons I do a "paper route" mostly to fellow postal workers and other long-time friends.

First day of class--January 15

I wanted to have a leaflet to take to my first class, but I didn't have time to write anything new. So I ran a few more copies of a leaflet issued at the height of the Iranian crisis and distributed it to all the students in the class before it started. During class the teacher (a young woman, recent Ph.D.) explained her plan for the course. As I had expected, political science teachers avoid most of the important issues (how are basic political decisions make, what causes war, fascism) in favor of such topics as "Public Opinion," "The Constitution," "Political Parties," and "Interest Groups." In the course of her introduction she said that she hoped some of us would participate in the upcoming election campaign. At an appropriate point, I raised my hand and said I hpoed that she wouldn't assume it was good to participate in elections and would discuss the question of whether such voting did any good, considering views such as mine that the bosses did what they wanted no matter what they said (I said that I had voted for LBJ because he said that he wouldn't send troops to Vietnam). I have since set it as my goal to try to say at least one thing each day that would raise a part of the party's line in class.

Second class--January 22

Before class I sold about 6 C-D in the class. (There are about 125 students in the class.) During class the teacher reviewed different theories of political power. She omitted any mention of a communist theory, only mentioning the cynical, anti-working class Mills-Marcuse view that an elite controls and the workers are apathetic, ill-informed and develop their ideas in accordance with what the elites want them to think. At an appropriate point, I raised my hand and pointed out that she hadn't mentioned the "Marxist" view (why didn't I call it communist?). It shared with the elitist view the idea that the conventional political process and the media are controlled by an elite. It holds, however, that the masses, or working class, is potentially a very active force for change (why didn't I say "revolution"?) and that the elite has to work overtime to try to control the working class and is often unsuccessful.

I mentioned the Vietnam war as an example. At first the rulers were able to manipulate public opinion in favor of the war. As the war progressed, however, the consciousness of workers changed and anti-war GIs played a big role in forcing the U.S. out of S.E. Asia. (I had in mind the fraggings, but I didn't mention them.) In trying to be brief, I was too abstract, didn't explain my example fully enough (most of the students were children in the 60s and early 70s.) And I did not mention revolution as part of the "Marxist" view. The rest of the class she discussed the British tradition of the colonialists and how the U.S. "revolution" involved more continuity than change.

Third class--January 24

This class occurred the day after Carter's state of the union speech, saying he would reinstate draft registration and go to war if U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf were threatened. Before class I distributed an anti-war leaflet (originally written for distribution to working class army reservists, the only leaflet that I had that they hadn't seen) with the INCAR anti-war petition printed on the back. I then announced that I had the petition and they could sign it after class. After q while the teacher came in, stopped at my seat, and asked if she would see me after class.

We had a good, honest discussion in class of Carter's speech and the upcoming war. Most students seemed resigned to war, but not enthusiastic. They felt that they had to defend their country, but one students suggested that they fraft the oldest first. Some had illusions, which I tried to dispel, that if there was a ground war, there was less likely to be a nuclear war. In the discussion I concentrated on making points relevant to what the other students had said, but didn't concentrate on getting the main parts of our line out. I'm not sure this was bad because the main points of our line had been presented in the literature I had handed out before class.

After the previous class I had felt that it was necessary to try to raise our line about the colonial period and the revolutionary war. So I looked up the series in C-D about American history, studied the relevant article (I could only find half of it), and rehearsed in my mind a little speech summarizing its

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I.P Breaks White House Ban

main points about the genocide of the native population, the enslavement of Africans, and the suppression of urban workers. In each case I was goint to try to show connections with the current period, particularly the continuity of the imperialist drive, from the attack on the native population to the post-WW II expansion around the globe, an empire now threatened by Soviet expansion. These were my plans, but after the previous discussion there was little class time, and the teacher used it up.

I would like to make a point here. All the previous night at work I had been on edge--partly because I was agitated by Carter's speech and angry that some workers agreed (I went off on several workers about this--with good effect). But I was also nervous about saying soemthing in class, more nervous than I had ever been about raising the party's line as a teacher. This is becuase in this case I was challenging the teacher (an authority figure). I was nervous despite 8 years in the party and over 10 years of raising communist politics in the classroom as a teacher. Therefore, I would suggest that, wherever possible, we plan to do classroom work by sending our comrades into the classroom in pairs, to check up on each other, discuss the line, and insure that those fears are defeated.

After class I went up with the teacher to her office. She said that some of the other students had complained about me, saying that I was intimidating. She wanted to have open discussion, in which she would be impartial and not take sides, but she felt that, because I was so much more articulate than most of the students, I would intimidate them. She proposed that we draw up a reading list and I meet with her separately to discuss topics of interest to me. I explained that I was in the class to meet some people and raise some ideas, that I might even hand out some material on the ruling class on my own. She was not pelased at this. She said our purposes might conflict. I agreed. She asked me not to distribute literature in her class. I said I had only done it before class and that I had a perfect (legal) right to do so and would not stop. That is how we left things. (A comrade pointed out that I do not want to make an enemy of the teacher unnecessarily and that she might be winnable on some points. I plan, therefore, to talk with her again and to argue that there are educational advantages to my being in the class.)

Fourth class--January 29

I was absent with the flu. The teacher announced at the beginning of class that I was in the class and explained that I had been a teacher at UMSL and was not in the class to learn but to "meet people." She said that her responsibility to other students was not to let me monopolize discussion, that I had used my quota of discussion time for the semester, and that she did not intend to call on me again in discussion. One student (J.) walked out in protest (without saying anything). Otherwise no discussion of this (she did not ask for any.)

Fifth class--January 31

Movie was planned for today; teacher was absent. I was told by another student (N.) during a break in the movie that the prof had discussed me last time and she said that she wouldn't call on me futher. This student came from her seat on the other side of class to sit with me, tell me this, and sign the INCAR petition. I asked N. what she thought I should do. She said she would talk to the teacher. After class J. came up and told me what happened and asked me if I wanted them to confront her. I told him to wait and I would try to see what was up. The TA came up to me and gave me the notes of what Prof S. had said. I went up to the Poli Sci office, called the chairman, and told him that I thought that an ufnortunate confrontation was brewing (Prof S. was unavailable out of town). She was trying to make an enemy of me, but I do not think that first year assistant professors of political science are the enemies we are

organizing to attack. I said that I realized that she was reacting from fear and lack of self-confidence, but that this was an indefensible response. I said that I wanted to resolve this quickly without getting into an open confrontation. He said that he would call me back before the next class.

Before class that day I distributed a leaflet in class attacking Carter's state fo the union speech and his plans for war.

Later that day I interviewed with a reporter for the student newspaper about the fight for my job (this was a result of my political presence on the campus).

On Friday I distributed 1000 InCAR fliers attacking C's state fo the union speech.

Sixth class--Tuesday February 5

Before class I met with Prof S and the chairman of Poli Sci. She said that she had not said that she wouldn't call on me in discussion (a lie). We agreed that I was to be treated like any other student in the class and that because I had used a lot of discussion time that I might not be called on as much for a couple of weeks. I suggested that my prescence in the class might be an educational advantage, exposing the students to ideas they wouldn't otherwise hear. This was rejected by the chairman, saying, "Prof S. is the teacher of the class, not you." She lectured in class, finished early, and dismissed the class. No discussion.

Seventh class--Thursday Feb. 7

I sold Challenge-Desafio before class. My contacts with J. and N. are solidifying, both buying C-D. Some others bought too. Prof. S. lectured, finished slightly early, and dismissed class, no discussion. J. and I talked after class and agreed that she may be trying to silence me by eliminating classroom discussion altogether.

Eighth day--Tuesday Feb. 12

Discussion of upcoming exam, led by TA. Prof. S. not present. CAR meeting had been planned for Friday the 15th. Flier advertising CAR meeting distributed in class. J. and N. say they can come. N. says she would like to come to conference.

Ninth day--Thursday Feb. 14

Exam. Sold C-D before class.

First INCAR meeting held Friday. Right-wing students threw snowballs at me as I leafletted for the meeting, but 1500 leaflets were distributed. Four other students came to the meeting; J. and N. from my class; V., whom I had met peititioning and leafletting and again selling C-D; and D., who got a leaflet and came. Three others came to disagree. I presented the basic principles of INCAR, a short history, and an account of the kind of anti-war movement INCAR was building. The last was interrupted by questions from those who came to disagree (who were basically honest, however). After about 30 minutes discussion with them I began to suggest that we wanted to conduct a meeting around INCAR's principles, with which they did not agree. One hour after the meeting started, they left and the five of us continued. My proposal for a forum was answered with the criticism: "we don't know enough about INCAR to defend its views." So we agreed to have a study group for the following friday and read "The Road Not Taken". They were invited to a picket line against a Navy recruiter (off campus) and to the conference.

Tenth class--Tuesday Feb. 19

Lecture on political polls. Some questions from students (first since her announcement about me), but no real discussion. Passed out invitations to conference before class. Asked J. and N. if they could carry some burden of classroom discussion. They felt they did not know some of the points I raised. We need to spread the responsibility for speaking up, but this will come only as others gain experience and knowledge of INCAR's ideas.

Eleventh class--Thursday Feb. 21

Lecture on voter participation. No discussion, a few questions. We need to get Prof S. to allow more discussion. First exam comes back. Combination of deadly boring lectures and racist test is causing tow black students who sit by me to drop the class. (Test was short answer, giving tremendous advantage to students who had more ~~pac~~ practice at formulating and writing down ideas in a brief disciplined answer. I got an "A" without doing any of the reading. Black students who had done the reading and come to class failed the test. This sort of test is easier to write than a multiple choice test, but very racist. I did not bring this up enough with other students.)

Tuesday

Twelfth class--/Feb. 26

Sold C-D before class. Lecture on political parties. Some questions from class. After class I met with Prof S. I was surprised that she did not seem as hostile as before and seem less threatened. I suggested that she have more discussion and suggested two topics. She seemed to agree with my suggestions.

Thirteenth class--Thursday Feb. 28

Discussion of election campaigns. Toward the end of class the lecture is interrupted by a question from J.: "You say that getting elected president depends on cultivating the proper 'image', but this seems a ridiculous way to choose a leader, given the seriousness of the problems in this country." The remark struck (me and others, I believe) like a thunderbolt. Also, Prof S. was at that point prepared for discussion. There followed for the next five minutes a discussion of whether there was any democratic control of policies or leadership or whether presidential elections were just a charade. Good discussion. I spoke up briefly for the first time in a month. I assume Prof S. will continue this discussion next time. A breakthrough of sorts, I believe. I sold C-D before class and talked with J. about the conference after class.

No more was added to the diary after this. My schedule at work was changed three times in three weeks, so I missed a week's classes. When my previous schedule was finally restored, I was working until 8:30 a.m. instead of 7. This greatly limited my chance to sell Challenge and talk to the students before class.

More important, however, was this: I was intimidated by the snowball throwing on February 15. Rather than making a plan to defeat my fear, and continue mass work, I stopped doing Friday agitations. Cynicism increased, and all my efforts became less aggressive. I tried to continue an InCAR study group with those who came to the first InCAR meeting, but my success was limited.

The most inportant weakness in the classroom work was that I let the teacher stop discussion in the class. We should have intervened boldly and quickly when it first happened. The result was fatal—by the end of the semester, only 15 to 25 students, none of them black, remained in what had become a boring and pointless class.

But there were strengths in the work, too, particularly in the period covered by the diary. Most important were daily agitation before class, daily distribution of literature in class, and coming to class prepared to say something relevant to the day's lecture. If our members in campus work can build on these strengths and correct the weaknesses, our work will move forward.

By R.L.

A Blow Against Jim Crow

The New Orleans General Strike of 1892

To most Americans, especially in the North, the South has appeared to be one solid mass of venomous racists, with white and black meeting only in hostility. That this is the usual picture is no accident. For more than one hundred years this image has been spread by the schools, films and printed word of those who stood to gain by it—the U.S. ruling class.

This is not to say that there was **no** reality to that image of total separation. The ruling class has worked very hard, beginning in the decades after the Civil War, to create the division of white and black workers in mutual enmity that has been the basis of low-wage, non-union industrialization of the South. By spreading this disunity the capitalist rulers of this country have been able to reap billions of dollars in super-profits from Southern workers, both black and white.

But if there is a reality to the image of separation, there has also been a reality to its opposite—to a history of multi-racial working class unity in struggle against this system of superexploitation. Because this unity so sharply threatened the profits of U.S. bosses, they resorted not only to brutality, intensified racism and a system of Jim Crow laws, but also to the falsification of history. The New Orleans General Strike of 1892, the months-long strikes of sugar refinery workers in Gramercy and Reserve, La. in the 1950's—these are only a sample of the history that has been torn, page by page, from the books. And it is this history that our Party, and the International Committee Against Racism, are continuing in the South today.

The militancy of New Orleans streetcar workers didn't end with the 1892 strike. Photos above, taken during 1929 strike, show how thousands of workers turned out to greet scabs hired by the Public Service Co. to run cars.

Longshoremen of the period enjoy an all-too-brief meal break on the levee. Dockworkers, both black and white, were driven to the point of exhaustion to keep up with bosses' need for profits from cotton exports.

The New Orleans General Strike stopped the city cold. Workers of nearly every industry, nearly every union, went out, and stayed out, even in the face of armed force. At the height of the strike an AFL organizer in the city wrote to Samuel Gompers:

> There are fully 25,000 men idle. There is no newspaper to be printed, no gas or electric light in the city, no wagons, no carpenters, painters or in fact any business going... It is a strike that will go down in history.*

New Orleans in 1892 was the biggest port of the South, handling the bulk of cotton exports. Its location at the mouth of the Mississippi also made it the port for much of the Midwest's agricultural produce. Shipping and transport were the heart of its industries. Employment in these industries was largely segregated. Each trade was either virtually all black or all white, and the unions were likewise divided. This division of the working class at the point of production was one of the main obstacles to maintaining the strike-born multi-racial unity after the strike was settled. Perhaps the primary weakness in the struggle was the lack of an organized anti-racist or revolutionary force to lead an on-going fight against racist divisions, and to show how and why the bosses were so intent on maintaining them.

The New Orleans strike grew out of the fight of street-car drivers for a 12-hour day for 16-hours pay. This struggle began in the Spring of 1892, six years after the historic fight for the shorter work week had begun in Chicago and given birth to May Day. It ended in victory, but, as could be expected, the bosses promptly violated the agreement and fired the workers who led the strike.

The angry drivers immediately went out on strike to enforce the 12-hour day and force the re-hiring of their leaders. The walkout lasted a week and saw the entire ruling class of New Orleans mobilize against the strikers. It also saw the working class mobilize similarly, not only to back the drivers, but also to organize themselves into unions. The Board of Trade, the rulers' front, was compelled to reinstitute the 12-hour day and agree to a closed shop for the drivers

This upsurge of unionism led to the formation of the Workingman's Amalgamated Council, a city-wide body composed of two delegates from each AFL local in the city. More than 49 locals, representing over 20,000 workers, took part.

*AFL Correspondence, J. Callahan to Gompers, Nov. 7, 1892

THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

Inspired by this victory, the members of three key unions in the transport field united into a formation called the Triple Alliance. On October 24th, 1892, when New Orleans business activity was at its peak, the Scalesmen and the Packers, both virtually all white, and the overwhelmingly black Teamsters went out on strike together for a 10-hour day, overtime after 60 hours, and for a union shop.

The bosses of New Orleans—not just the strikers' employers—were thunderstruck, not so much over the workers' demands (which were "bad" enough) but over the fact that, less than 30 years after the abolition of slavery, white workers would join with black workers to fight for common demands. They moved swiftly to unite their own forces for an all-out strike-breaking assault. The struck employers were joined by the four railroads entering New Orleans; the bosses of the cotton, sugar and rice exchanges; the clearing houses; and the mechanics and dealers exchange. Together they organized a defense fund and pushed for legal and military action to "preserve property rights."

This bosses' "united front" refused to even recognize the existence of the Triple Alliance. This provoked the Workingmen's Amalgamated Council to set up a Labor Committee of five to organize city-wide solidarity for the embattled strikers, realizing that the outcome of this walkout would affect the wages, hours and working conditions, as well as the actual existence, of every single union in New Orleans. The battle was joined.

Seeing how the workers had upped the ante, the bosses' association—the Board of Trade—moved to split the strikers along racist lines. They announced they would sign an agreement with the predominantly-white Scalesmen and Packers unions, but not with the black Teamsters because they would never "enter into any agreement with n---rs.* Since an agreement with the Triple Alliance would include the Teamsters, the Board declared that this would place the bosses under the "control of black workers," and soon the man who would control the Alliance "would be a Big Black Negro."**

*New Orleans Times Democrat, Oct. 28, 1892
**same

The bosses' response also included an orgy of racism in the press. Local papers featured such headlines as "Negroes Attack White Men," "Attacked by Negroes" and stories that "mobs of brutal Negro strikers" were marauding through the city "beating up all who attempted to interfere with them. **If ever there was a time—based on decades of carefully nurtured racism—for white workers to break ranks, this was it. But, to the astonishment of the ruling class, not only did rank-and-file unity remain solid in the face of this lynch spirit, but the white strikers in the Scalesmen and Packers publicly vowed that they would never return to work unless the bosses signed an agreement with all three members of the Triple Alliance.**

Less than 30 years after the abolition of slavery white workers joined with black workers for common demands.

Behind this sharp anti-racist reaction, the rest of the AFL unions began to call for a general strike to back up the black and white strikers. Rank and filer workers enthusiastically endorsed the idea at meetings throughout the city.

This development so enraged the rulers that one of their mouthpieces, the New Orleans **Times-Democrat**, labeled the white unionists "lunatics" for supporting a general strike that would help black workers win their demands. In a statement reeking of slave-master racism about the "dominance" of black workers in the New Orleans trade union movement, the newspaper ranted:

"The very worst feature . . . seems to be that the white element of the labor organizations appear either to be under the dominance of Senegambian influence,

or that they are at least lending themselves as willing tools to carry out Senegambian schemes.''* (Senegambia was a region in West Africa.)

But this racist garbage failed to split the workers. Seeing this, the bosses declared that they would refuse to bargain at all unless the strikers returned to work, a trick as old as capitalism itself. The workers' answer was to push harder for a general strike backing the Triple Alliance. Events moved swiftly to a climax.

After several attempts to reach agreement failed, on Nov. 8—two weeks after the Triple Alliance had begun their walkout—25,000 workers from 42 different unions went out on a general strike both to support the Triple Alliance and to put forward their own demands. The cry went out to ''tie up the town,'' and tie it up they did. New Orleans was paralyzed. The street cars stopped running; gas, light and power were all cut off; the city was in total darkness.

In addition to backing the Triple Alliance each union added demands for recognition and the closed shop. Some, such as the sugar workers, also made demands for shorter hours and higher wages. Two, the street-car drivers and the printers, had to break already-existing contracts to join the general strike, but join they did, the drivers remembering the support they had received earlier that year in their 12-hour victory.

The strike was marked by such overwhelming unity among the working class —such groups as musicians, hat, clothing and shoe clerks, as well as industrial and utility workers backed it—that the ruling class was forced to organize its own ''united front'' of bosses. Committees of five represented each class as workers and bosses squared off for a titanic battle, never before attempted by unions in the South.

THE BOSSES RESPOND

The bosses of New Orleans business did not see the strike only as an immediate threat, or only a local one. They were well aware of the potential damage to their class nationally should multiracial unity and this kind of militancy spread. Even the planters ''were apprehensive lest the virus of labor organization infect the Negro and spread to the plantations.'' Of course, the bosses were not at all defenseless in the face of this. They were united, with large funds at their command. They controlled the press, and had the support of Northern and Western industrialists. And more importantly, they had state power—control of the power of the government. With this array of power the bosses of New Orleans were confident they could crush not only the strike, but any threat for years to come from the workers of New Orleans. They were wrong.

They tried to use the cry of ''anarchy'' to provoke mass use of the militia, but there was also fear of what that might provoke from the most united working class any city in the U.S. had ever seen. The bosses called for the operation of the gas and electric plants to demoralize the workers and provoke violence, so that there would be an excuse to bring in the army. Gov. Foster, doing their bidding, ordered the resumption of utility service, but the strikers defied him. Then the bosses offered to pay the wages of special deputies if they would come forth and operate the utilities. In a city of perhaps 100,000 workers, only 59 answered the call. It failed miserably.

The four railroads serving New Orleans supported the bosses by attempting to import strike-breakers from Birmingham, Mobile, Memphis and Galveston, but this also failed. The New Orleans employers began training their clerks and supervisors ''for any contingency.'' They even offered to pay for the use of the entire State Militia. The Governor responded, ordering out the Militia, but the city was so paralyzed and the strikers organized so well, that there was nothing the Militia was able to do to get things moving.

Once again the bosses tried racism, as they had in the earlier days of the initial Triple Alliance strike. The papers cried that black workers would ''take advantage of the crisis to seize control of the city,'' and reported ''instances where ladies and school children had been insulted by the blacks.'' But this racist garbage fell on deaf ears. The strikers remained solid.

This unity caused the financial secretary of the Marine and Stationary Firemen's Protective Union to tell Gompers that black and white strikers were answering the racism by resolving ''to cement the Bonds of Brotherhood and Fraternal ties that will stand before the world as an everlasting monument of strength, and show to the world at large

that in unionism there is strength, and that our order stands preeminently at the head of the human Race."

The unity of the strikers remained unbroken. The employers' side finally agreed to sit down to negotiate with the unions, including the black Teamsters, which they had said they would never do. The Triple Alliance gained the 10-hour day, premium pay for overtime, and adjusted wage schedules. The other unions in the general strike also won shorter hours and pay hikes. However, the preferential union shop was not won, having to wait another 45 years. But signed into the agreement was a clause barring "discrimination against union members."

Already-existing-unions increased their membership because of the strike and new ones were formed. The New Orleans **Times-Democrat** reported on Oct. 30 (during the strike) that, "Yesterday there were three new unions formed... The names... were not given to the press, but it was intimated that every man in the Federation of Labor was actively engaged in furthering the interests of the order and in getting together as many bodies of organized labor as possible." After the strike, Gompers declared that with one fell swoop the economic barrier of color was broken down... the movement speaks well for the future of organized labor in the "New South" about which the politicians prate so much and mean so little." We should point out that Gompers, too, prated much and meant little. The AFL, of course, did nothing to follow up on the unity of the strike and continued to organize narrow, all-white craft unions, and those mainly in the North. The task of organizing millions of industrial workers, including tens of thousands of minority workers, into industrial unions was left to the CIO in the 1930s. And even in New Orleans the lessons of unity did not last long beyond the strike. Over a period of time, the bosses, taking advantage of the fact that the working class was still segregated in the shops, were able to re-divide them and regain what they had been forced to yield. The "New South" continued to be the haven of low-wage, non-union labor and of racism.

The heroic unity of New Orleans workers in the face of the full arsenal of racism, intimidation, legal maneuvers and armed force is a lesson for all U.S. workers. Their actions stand in sharp contrast to those of the current crop of "labor leaders," those social fascists who serve as the Judas goats for the U.S. ruling class. Today, when millions of workers face mass unemployment, when racism and fascism are growing daily as the U.S. rulers prepare for World War III, these fakers follow the opposite path of the New Orleans strikers. They would have told the strikers not to oppose the injunctions, to surrender to the militia, not to block the scabs, and, in fact, not to strike at all, because "longer hours are necessary to keep the job competitive."

Certainly the needs of the working class in the U.S. today are little different from those of 1892. The ruling class's program for productivity, reduced benefits, real wage losses through inflation, increased racism and war, calls for the united response exemplified by the New Orleans workers, combined with the ongoing struggle for multiracial unity led by InCAR. Only through this struggle for a mass militant anti-racist organization can we win the permanent working-class unity that was needed in 1892 and is needed now.

The needs of the working class in the U.S. today are little different from those of 1892.

And what is needed to not only win all our demands, but to keep the fruits of victory, is the leadership of our Party, in building a mass movement to make a socialist revolution. Only with the total destruction of capitalism—the bosses and their state apparatus and their "labor lieutenants"—will the working class be able to build society in its own interests. And only in the course of the struggle for multi-racial unity and the struggle for socialism will such a thing as a 'New South' emerge. PL★

*New Orleans Times Democrat, Nov. 4, 1892

Three Poems

There will always be a group of people
Who will draw from the past to feel the future.
And they will strive for a goal
Which will be obtained at some distant point
On which they may never stand.

As time rolls toward this point,
More people will sense the impact
Of what is not yet.
And when the world reaches this point
All men and women will take sides.

The masses will move, the world will teeter
And they will move forward or fall back.
But if they do fall, they will not tumble to the beginning,
For the world will be braced by
The backs of the men and women who have pushed this far

Then again, but this time
With the goal not so far off as before,
Those who feel the future will strive again
And, if when the world reaches this point, we move forward,
We will have conquered one more obstacle
On the road which all men must go,
The road to revolution. —S.R.

Remember
Revolution.
Your enemies do.
Remember
How they attacked
With their cops
And their courts.
Remember the sting
Of their clubs on your back
The taste
Of blood in your mouth
(Blood bitter-sweet,
Pain yet power
Brief agony
Rising anger)
Remember
Never forget,
The wretched stench
Of holding cells
The icy steel
Of prison bars,
Remember
The swastikas glaring
In their eyes.
Remember revolution.
—T. M.

Where are we going?
What is in store?
Thus asked the young man
and all ignored.
The school said "All is fine and just."
Till the Army said "Come with us."

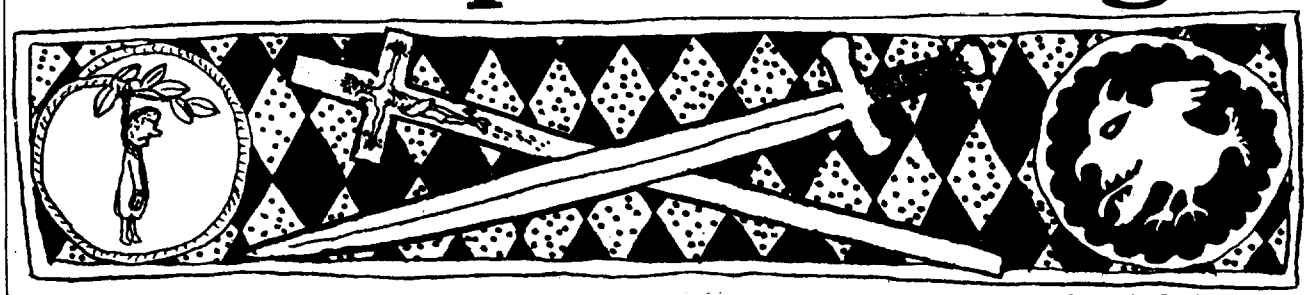
Where are we going?
What is in store?
Thus asked the young man
and all ignored.
The sergeant said "We must fight."
The captain said "Die you might."
The brass said "But for good is your plight."

Where are we going?
What is in store?
Thus asked the young man
and all ignored
The friend said "Let's not go."
The private said "But it's world war, you know."
The red said "We've got to take over this show."

I know where I'm going.
I know what's in store.
He said the red was right!
And no one ignored. —J.L.

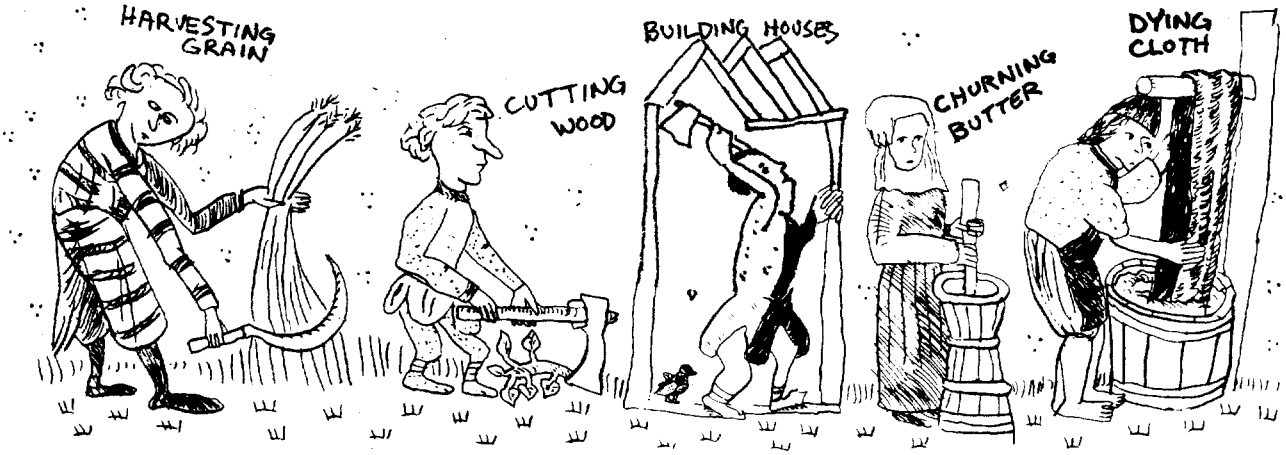
This is Europe at the beginning of the 15th Century. Everywhere there are villages like this and big forests that divide them. The people here have little to do with the people who live in the villages on the other side of the forest. They seldom go into the forest because they are afraid of the savage animals and of the "bad spirits" they believe live there. Outwardly, life is routine and uneventful. Children don't go to school because there are no schools. Nobody reads newspapers because there are no newspapers, and almost nobody reads at all. No one works in factories, because there are no factories. There is only the land and those who live on it. There are the peasants who farm the land and provide food for themselves and the others in the village. There are the articans who make shoes and dresses and pots and pans and the like in the villages. The feudal lords, who own the land, live in the castle on the hill. And there are the priests, who pray in the church. In the next pages we will see more of these people, and begin to see

How Capitalism Began



The "cartoon history" which begins here has been adapted and freely translated, with some additional material, from an Italian version of a pamphlet originally published in Sweden. We hope that it will be useful and stimulate discussion about using different techniques of art and writing to explain our line and our understanding of the science of history.

This cartoon does not succeed entirely in that aim. There are some weaknesses, notably a quite static view of medieval society, not showing the changes and class struggles that were already taking place as a prelude to the rise of the bourgeoisie. Perhaps some of our members and friends will be inspired to try their hand at using these techniques in an even sharper way.

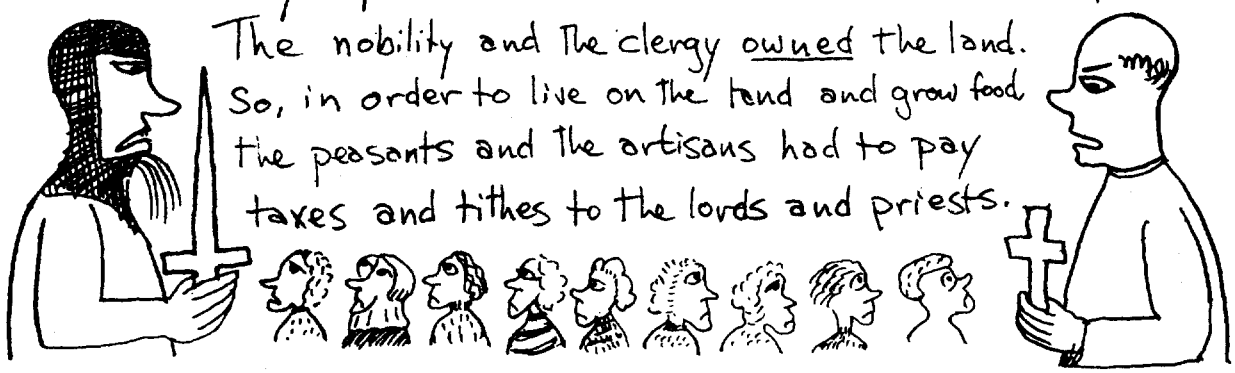


EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING,

EVERYTHING!

had to be made by hand by the peasants and artisans. Food, clothes, houses — everything that people needed in order to live.

The feudal lords and the priests didn't make anything, but they had clothes and food and houses, anyway! How was that possible? Simple!


The nobility and the clergy owned the land. So, in order to live on the land and grow food the peasants and the artisans had to pay taxes and tithes to the lords and priests.

Few were willing to oppose the power of the feudal lords. The lords, after all, had armies, and the armies had sharp swords.

Since the peasants had always been taught to be superstitious and to believe in hell, they were afraid to oppose the church, either.

SO... We can see that in medieval society there were different classes:

The class that didn't own the land: Peasants and Artisans

and the class that did own the land — The nobles and the church.

John, age 11:
There have always been taxes—what can we do about it?

Peter, artisan, 29:
We can have land without owners, but owners can't have land without us!

Grandma Anna, age 64:
My grandfather took part in a rebellion against our lord...but then the lord's soldiers came and caught him and killed him. The priests say he went straight to hell.

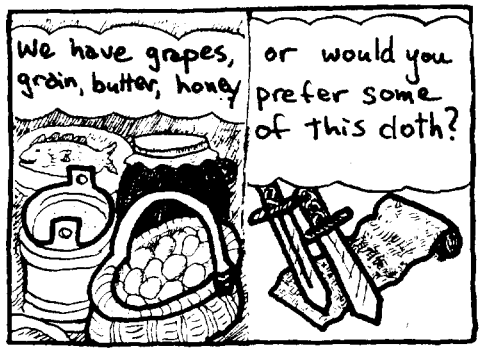
Baroness Irina, 34:
What is all this foolish talk? It's really all very simple—we own the land, so the peasants owe us the taxes. The artisans, too. It's always been that way.

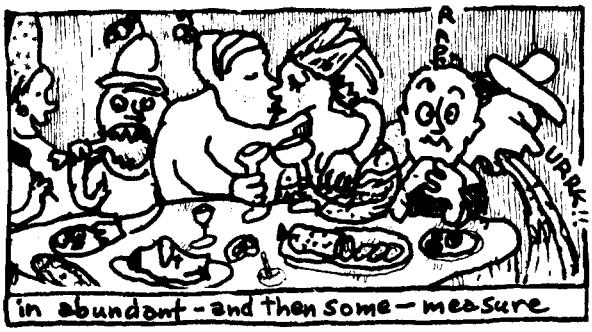
Father Thomas, 57:
Since God created both rich and poor, it is only natural for the poor to pay taxes to the rich. It is God's way.

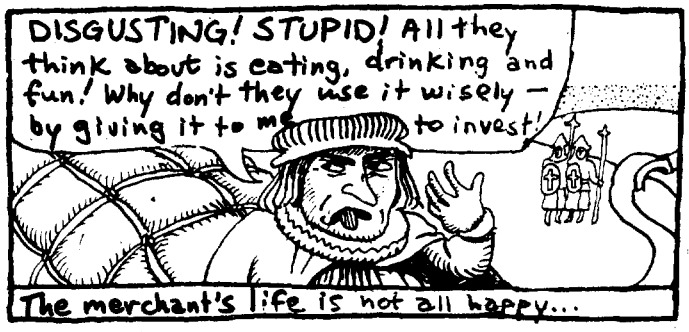
The goods come from far away. The stranger is a

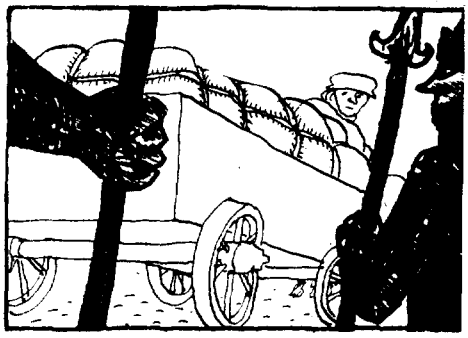
MERCHANT!

He comes from the far-off city of Venice.

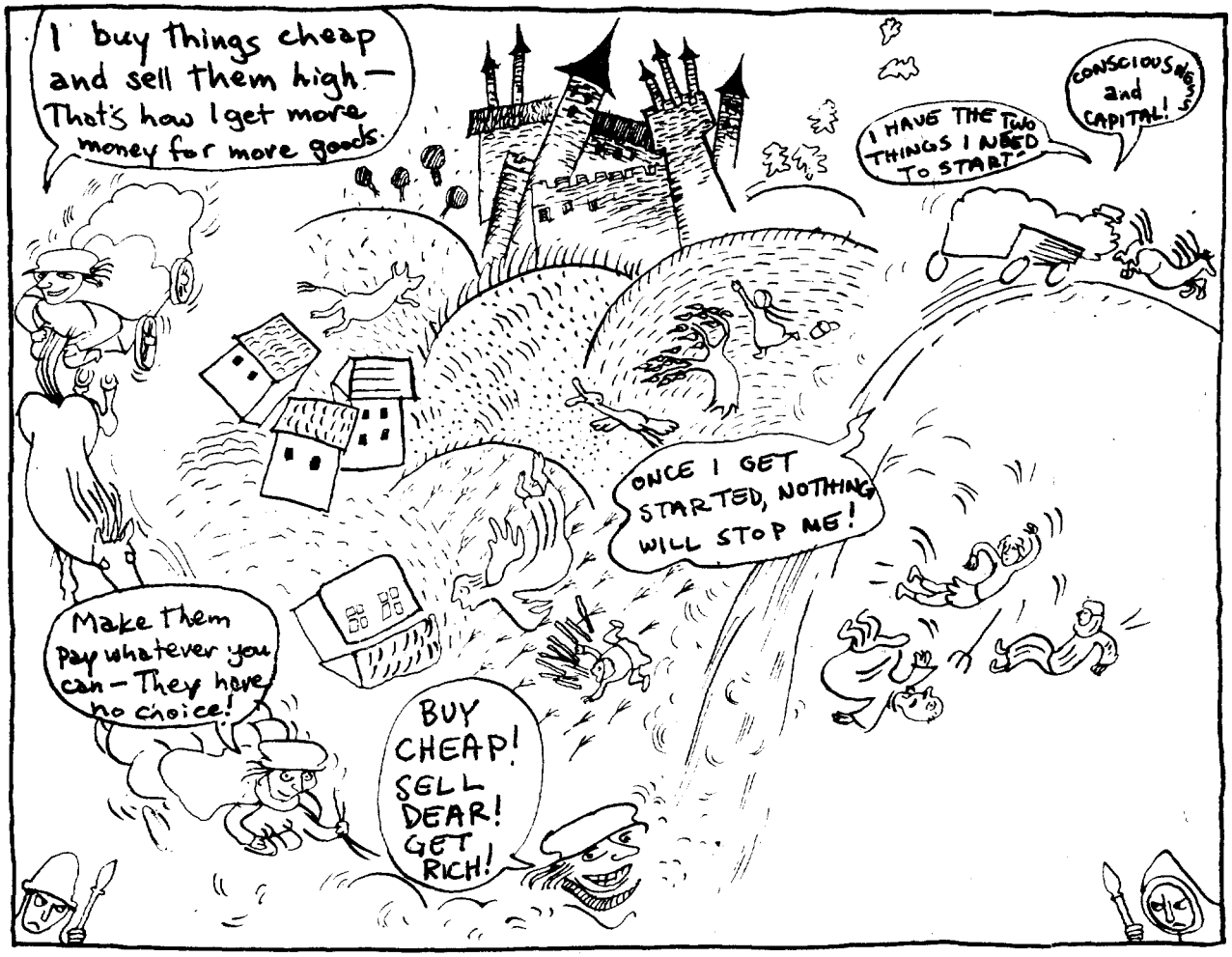





DISGUSTING! STUPID! All they think about is eating, drinking and fun! Why don't they use it wisely — by giving it to me to invest!
The merchant's life is not all happy...



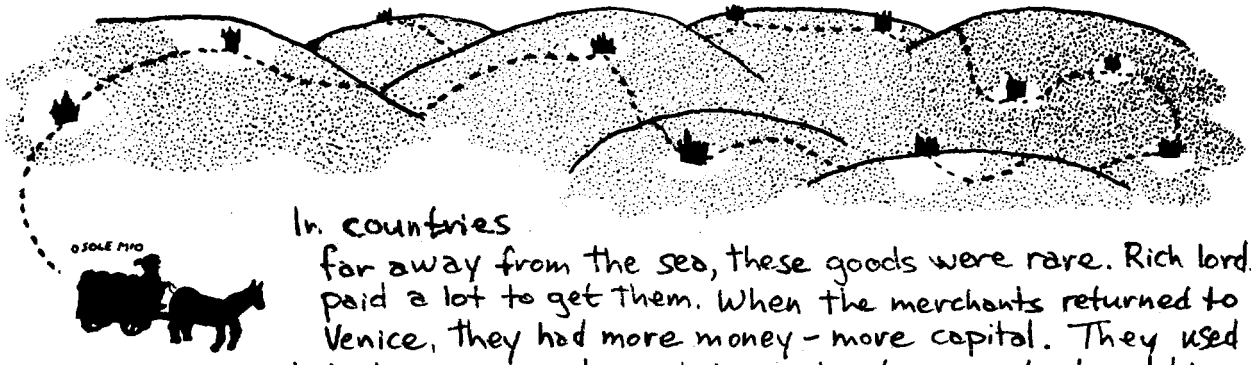
These are not happy moments for the merchant. He doesn't own land. He doesn't make what he sells. All he does is buy and sell - and pay taxes. So how does he live?


I buy things cheap and sell them high — That's how I get more money for more goods.
I HAVE THE TWO THINGS I NEED TO START
CONSCIOUSNESS and CAPITAL!
ONCE I GET STARTED, NOTHING WILL STOP ME!
Make them pay whatever you can — They have no choice!
BUY CHEAP! SELL DEAR! GET RICH!

Thus, the Venetian merchants gathered a lot of money... they called it CAPITAL

They used it to buy precious merchandise from other countries. Rare goods arrived from Arabia, China, India and Africa...

Then the merchants travelled around Europe, selling their goods...

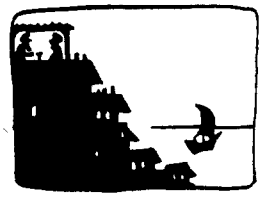


In countries far away from the sea, these goods were rare. Rich lords paid a lot to get them. When the merchants returned to Venice, they had more money - more capital. They used it to buy more goods, and to send out more trading ships...

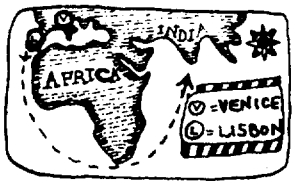
...and they got more money. In that way they became

MERCHANT CAPITALISTS!

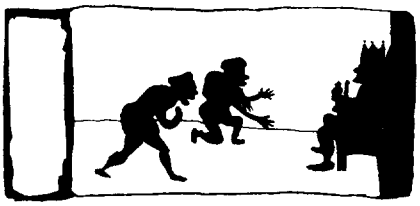
The Venetian capitalists wanted to keep the trade with Arabia and other lands for themselves—after all, it was very profitable for them. . .



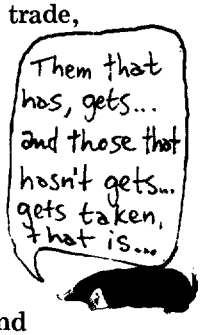
Lisbon, 1497: The Portuguese merchants also wanted in on this trade, and began to make their plans.



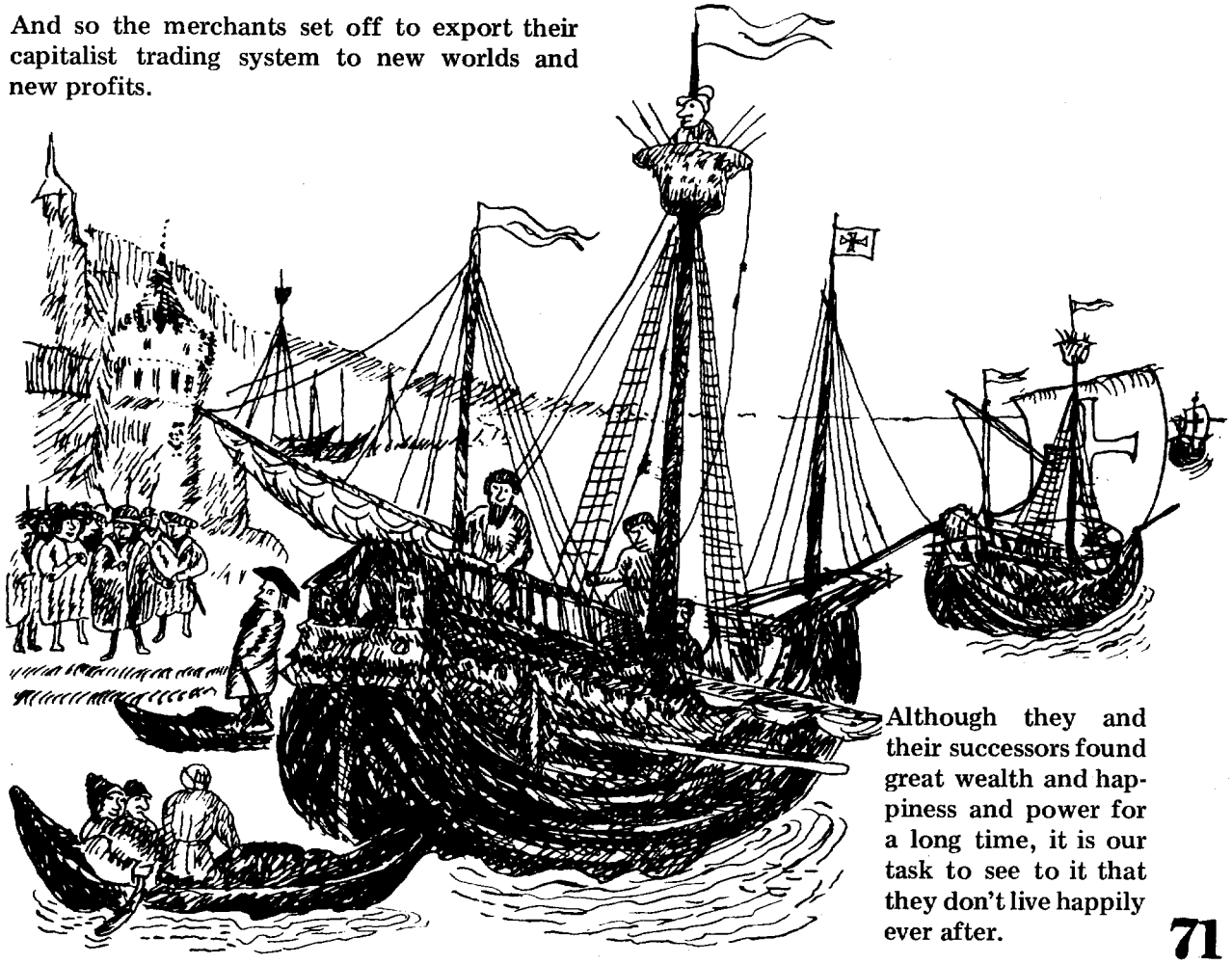
One said: "We can get to India by sea if we sail all the way around Africa."
Another said: "But that's dangerous!"
"It doesn't matter," the first one answered.



The next day they went to the king for permission—and for money. The permission didn't cost him anything, but to buy the ships he had to dip into his supply of money taxed from the poor.



And so the merchants set off to export their capitalist trading system to new worlds and new profits.



Although they and their successors found great wealth and happiness and power for a long time, it is our task to see to it that they don't live happily ever after.

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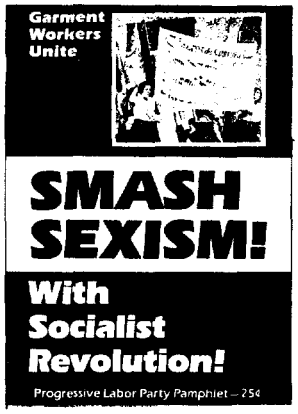

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